





Day 1


 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

Introduction -- Who Wrote the Gospel of Mark?

 “This book was written by John Mark, who many believe was directly mentored by Peter for his gospel knowledge. We read in 1 Peter 5:13, ‘...and so does my son, Mark.’ This John Mark is thought to be related to Barnabas and resided in Jerusalem per Acts 12:12, ‘When [Peter realized that an angel of the Lord had miraculously freed him from prison], he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying.’ [\[https://www.christianity.com/bible/niv/mark/\]](https://www.christianity.com/bible/niv/mark/)

 Acts 15:36-40 recounts how a disagreement over the young John-Mark caused the Paul/Barnabas mission team to split, which had the effect of doubling the outreach. “³⁶ Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, ‘Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.’ ³⁷ Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, ³⁸ but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia [Acts 13:13] and had not continued with them in the work. ³⁹ They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord.” In verse-39 Barnabas is mentioned for the last time in the chronology of the Book of Acts.

 “It is inspiring to read in 2 Timothy 4:11 that Paul ultimately [reconciled with] Mark saying that ‘he is a tremendous help for me in my ministry.’

 “Mark is thought to be written between 50 and 55 A.D.” [\[https://www.christianity.com/bible/niv/mark/\]](https://www.christianity.com/bible/niv/mark/)

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

¹ The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Q1. Who does Mark say Jesus is?

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Q2. How does the dictionary define the word “gospel”?


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Q3. Is “Christ” Jesus’ last name? Or a title?

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 In the western world we traditionally format our names: first name, middle name, and last name (surname). In the time of Jesus, people were referred to by their first name, which was followed by their trade or father’s name. Examples are John the Baptist and James the son of Zebedee. Growing-up Jesus was probably referred to as Jesus the son of Joseph; and Joseph was called Joseph the Carpenter or Joseph the son of Heli (Luke 3:23).

 The Hebrew word Messiah translates into the Greek language as Christ. Christ and Messiah both mean “Anointed One”. In Israel’s history, prophets of God would anoint the king-to-be with oil as a way of consecrating the individual to his divine calling. In Jesus’ case God Himself anointed His beloved Son Jesus with the Holy Spirit, who was represented by the descending dove (Mark 1:10) after John baptized Jesus. In Paul’s Epistles (letters) he will sometimes interchange Jesus Christ with Christ Jesus (see Galatians 1.12; 2.4). Frankly, this writer prefers the format Christ Jesus, because it places the divine title of Christ before His Name.

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²It is written in Isaiah the prophet:

"I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way" –

Q4. Who is the “messenger”?

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Q5. To whom does “you” refer?

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³"a voice of one calling in the desert, Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.' " [from Isaiah 40:3]

Q6. Why did Mark quote the Old Testament?

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Q7. Is the Old Testament important to us Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ?

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⁴And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵The 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.

Q8. Did many come to see and listen to John?

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Q9. What did the people do before John baptized them?

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Q10. What does “repent” mean to you?


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Luke 3:2^b-3, 7-9, 18: the word of God came to John, son of Zechariah in the desert. ³ He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. . . ⁷ John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ⁹ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." . . . ¹⁸ And with many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them.


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Day 2

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⁶John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

Q11. Did people find a man who was well-dressed?

 If we wanted to select someone to announce our pending arrival, we would choose a well-groomed, well-dressed, well-educated, well-mannered, respectable "point" person, whose sole purpose would be to impress people as s/he prepared the public for our imminent arrival. It would be much like a herald of old proclaiming the arrival of the king. However, our choice is definitely not God's choice. (See 1 Corinthians 1.18-25)

1 Corinthians 1:18, 25: For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. . . ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

⁷And 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.

Q12. Many people are flocking to John. Yet, John himself is waiting for someone. From John's words, does John eagerly anticipate this person or is he worried?

Q13. From what John said, why was he "not worthy to stoop down and untie" the sandals of the person yet to come?


Q14. It is human nature to want people to look up to us and to say nice things about us, our personalities, our abilities, our work! How did John want people to think of him?

⁸I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Q15. What / Who is the Holy Spirit?


John 14:16-17 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever -- ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

 See also Matthew 3.16; John 1.32-33; John 4.24; Acts 2.1-4; Romans 8:26-27

Continued

Day 3

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The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus

⁹ At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

Q16. Are John and Jesus related? (See Luke 1.36)

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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.

¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

Q17. "... a voice came from heaven" refers to whom?

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Q18. What do you think Jesus felt? (People were made in the image of God: Genesis 1:27. Jesus was human: Philippians 2:8.)

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Q19. The "Spirit" refers to the Holy Spirit. Was Jesus able to perform miracles before now?

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Q20. Prior to the anointing of the Holy Spirit (in the form of a dove), did young Jesus ever sin during His life?

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Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest [Jesus] who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are -- yet was without sin.

 With Jesus' baptism and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the perfect and pure man Jesus began His true ministry.


¹² At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert, ¹³ and he was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

Q21. Was Jesus' temptation for Him, for us, or for Satan?

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Day 4

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Matthew 4:1-11

The Temptation of Jesus

¹ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

Q22. Was Jesus hungry after nearly six weeks without food? And is this a significant fact?


 While we do not know the precise definition of the number "40", forty occurs a number of times in Scripture. The number 40 generally symbolizes a period of testing or trial. Examples include: Genesis 7:4 (Noah, rained for 40 days and nights); Exodus 34:28 (Moses recorded Commandments over 40 days); Numbers 32:13 (Israel wanders in desert 40 years); Ezekiel 4:6 (Ezekiel laid on his side for 40 days); Jonah 3:4 (Jonah prophesied in Nineveh 40 days); Acts 1:3 (after His crucifixion, Jesus appeared over 40 days); and other references.


³ The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Q23. Who is the "tempter"?

Q24. Is the "tempter" alive and well today?

Q25. What was the "tempter" really suggesting to Jesus?

 Satan basically said, "IF you are the Son of God, why don't you prove it? It isn't a big deal. You're starving and you can turn that stone into bread... can't you? Come on, satisfy your hunger!"

 Satan was using the temptation of self or selfishness or selfish desires ("Hey, if it feels good, it must be good!" or "I'm not hurting anyone and it makes me happy!") to cause Jesus to sin against His Father. Bread would never have tasted so good to a man who had been without food for forty days/nights.

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⁴Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (Deuteronomy 8.3)

Q26. Where do we find "every word that comes from the mouth of God"?

Q27. As Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, how often should we read God's Word? Why?

Q28. Is reading and studying God's Word important to our faith and to our life in this world?

Q29. Is the Bible just another book? Or is there a spiritual power within the printed Word?

Day 5



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⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.



Q30. What do you think Jesus saw?

⁶"If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" (Psalm 91.11&12)

Q31. Who is quoting Scripture to prove his point? Is there a lesson in this to us?

Q32. What was the "tempter" really suggesting to Jesus?

Continued


-  Again, Satan basically said, “IF you are the Son of God, why don’t you prove it? You’re powerful. Correct? And IF Scripture is true, then you will be saved by angels... What’s the big deal? Or are you afraid to trust your father to save your life? Come on, show me.”
-  Satan was using the temptation of pride (“You say you are the Son of God, why don’t you prove it?”) to cause Jesus to sin against His Father. God loves His Son more than we can ever hope to comprehend (while we are alive in this world). And God loves us the same! However, sin is the barrier between the Holy and pure Lord God Almighty and us. God gave us the bridge to pass over that barrier of sin to Him... the bridge is the Lord Christ Jesus and our belief in Him, His death, and His resurrection.

⁷ Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" (Deuteronomy 6:16)

Q33. When we pray, do we sometimes “test” God with what we ask?

Q34. If God answered every one of our prayers (a Heavenly vending machine), what would happen to free will (or free choice)?

Day 6



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⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Q35. Describe some of the rich enticements that Jesus saw.


Q36. What would you do for a million dollars, or 500-million dollars? Would you like to be President, with the power that goes along with the office?

Q37. Did the devil have ownership rights to the world?

-  Again, Satan basically said, “Look at all the splendor that is before you! I will give this to you, Jesus. All you have to do is bow down right here in front of me. Look at what I will give you. It is just a tiny, little thing that I ask from you in return.”
-  Satan was using the temptation of lust to cause Jesus to sin against His Father. Can you imagine the power Jesus had at His fingertips? The first chapter of John’s Gospel begins, “¹ In the beginning was the Word [Jesus] and the Word [Jesus] was with God and the Word [Jesus] was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through Him all things were made...”. Just imagine the power and the wisdom the Creator of the world must have at His command?

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¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'“ (Deuteronomy 6.13)

 Did you notice that Jesus did not refute Satan’s ability to give the world to Jesus?

Q38. How does the world tempt us today?


Q39. The world is full of temptations. How do you resist temptation?


Q40. Are you quick to pray, when you are tempted?

Q41. When is a sin a sin? Is being tempted a sin? Or is it when we give in to a temptation?

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Q42. Does the devil have power over Jesus?

 Jesus said, “Away from me, Satan!...” and Satan immediately left Him. We shall see in later chapters of Mark that Satan (or the devil or the tempter) does indeed know whom Jesus is and has no recourse but to obey Jesus’ commands and prayers. Praise be to God! Amen.

 There are three basic temptations: selfishness, pride, and lust. Jesus resisted each one! The way Satan presented those temptations to our Lord was more enticing than anything we might experience or that we can even imagine. Jesus knew His Old Testament and He used passages from Deuteronomy to repulse Satan’s temptations. Fortunately, God has given us these examples to use, when we too are tempted.

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