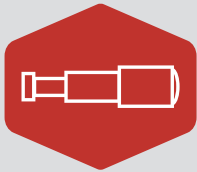




Lesson 4: Mark 1:12-13 Into the Wild

Main Idea: This lesson looks at the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness and offers encouragement for your own wilderness experiences.

Scripture: Mark 1:12-13



The Author's Lens (Spyglass)

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

Matthew writes eleven verses (Matthew 4:1-11) and Luke writes thirteen verses (Luke 4:1-13) about the three different temptations Jesus faced. Mark writes only two verses about this, yet it appears that he saw a facet of Jesus' temptation the other writers did not see. He saw the temptation as an initial event in the lifelong struggle Jesus had with Satan. Matthew and Luke use the word *devil*, and Mark uses the word *Satan*, which are among the words used throughout Scripture to portray the evil one:

- Satan: the adversary or enemy of our souls.
- Devil: the one who slanders, and spreads lies about believers and decries our righteousness.
- Evil Power: the power that works against God and Christ.

Mark tells us Jesus came up out of the water, saw heaven opened, received the anointing of the Holy Spirit and without any time lapse, was immediately driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted. Mark seems to place

special emphasis on the wilderness in his description of Jesus' temptation. In fact, the word *wilderness* appears fourteen times in the first thirteen verses of Mark and twice in the temptation account. Craig Keeners asserts, "Many believed that demons were especially attracted to places like pagan temples, bathhouses, graveyards and deserts. Readers would sense the suspense as Jesus battled with Satan on Satan's own turf."¹

Mark states the Spirit *drove* Jesus, a strong word. *Drove* means to eject, throw, or hurl. It is the idea that the Spirit of God is putting Jesus in the wilderness. In contrast, Matthew and Luke give the idea that Jesus was led into the wilderness. But according to Mark, Jesus had a strong inner compulsion that if He wanted to stay in the will of the Father, He had to go into the wilderness. Mark points out the physical and spiritual side of battles. Jesus was driven into the wilderness as a test of His submission.

In the wilderness, Mark sees the confrontation with Satan as the important aspect of the temptation. He sees this confrontation as the beginning of the battle which culminates at the cross. Facing temptation strengthened Jesus' mind, heart, and soul.

Mark also helps the reader understand that the wilderness is a place of divine provision. The wilderness for Mark was desolate, lonely, hostile, and dangerous. In the wilderness, Jesus was in a fight for His life. Mark reminds the reader that when needed, God can use any means, earthly or heavenly, to bring any supplies needed to aid and comfort a believer who is in warfare with Satan.

¹ Kenner, Craig. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary 2nd Edition*, (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2014), pg. 130.

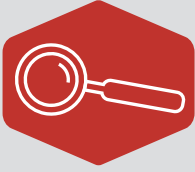


My Lens (Eyeglasses)

What does this Scripture say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in the text and bullet points below, you will better understand what God's Word is saying to you today.

Reading this passage in Mark helps answer some questions believers may have regarding their own wilderness experiences. Believers will be tempted and tried. In fact, it seems the closer to God one is drawn, the more difficult the trials one faces. A believer's greatest experiences with God are often followed by their most grievous trials. Consider these potential lessons from this passage:

- A believer's inner resources for survival and creativity are tested when they are all alone and tempted by the devil.
- A believer's physical condition combined with emotional swings, and a hostile environment can elevate the dread of loneliness.
- A believer's unbroken communion with God is heightened in the midst of temptation.



The Holy Spirit Lens (Magnifying Glass)

How can the Scripture apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Application:

- Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:
 - » Who appears in this passage?
 - » Where is this passage taking place?
 - » When is this passage occurring?
 - » Why is this passage important?
 - » What is happening in this passage?
 - » How does this passage apply to my life?

- Circle and write down any recurring words in this passage.

