

## Mark 1:9-13 Discussion Guide

### TEXT - Read Mark 1:9-13 (ESV) **The Baptism & Temptation**

<sup>9</sup> In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." <sup>12</sup> The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup> And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.

- What sticks out to you in this text? Any questions that come up?
- What is going on in this text (summarize the main points)? What is the context for the text?
- Are there OT references in this text? If so, how do the NT writers interpret this text?
- How does this text connect with the Gospel? What Gospel themes do you see in the text?

### THEOLOGY - What do we learn about God from this text?

- What attributes or aspects of the character and nature of God do you see in these passages? What else can we learn about God from the text? Take a moment to list these out together.

### LIFE

- What is God trying to reveal to us about himself in Jesus in this passage? What is God speaking to you about himself?
- Jesus is not embarrassed or ashamed about coming from the backwater town of Nazareth. How has Jesus helped you overcome events from your past?
- What is God revealing to you about himself through Jesus' baptism? How has your public proclamation of being a follower of Jesus through the act of baptism changed you?
- Adam was tempted and failed whereas Jesus did not fail. Where are you being tempted today and how are you calling on Jesus to help you?

### PRAYER

- Pray in response to what God revealed to you in this text. If there is sin, confess it to him in prayer. If there is a need, petition God in prayer. If there is encouragement, praise God and share with others.
- What is one personal need you have that we can pray for you as a group?
- Pray for one friend, family member, or coworker with who you want to share the love of Jesus with.

Commentary on Mark 1:1-8

v. 9 **Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan:** Jesus was not baptized because He needed cleansing from sin; He was sinless, as John himself understood ([Matthew 3:14](#)). Instead, Jesus was baptized in keeping with His entire mission on earth: to do the will of the Father and to identify with sinful man. Jesus didn't *have* to be baptized. He also didn't *have* to die on a cross in our place. He did both things to express His solidarity with fallen man.

v. 10 **Immediately:** The ancient Greek word is *euthus*, and this is the first of more than 40 times this word is used in the Gospel of Mark.

v. 11 **You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:** When this voice of God the Father spoke from heaven, everyone knew that Jesus was not just another man being baptized. They knew Jesus was the perfect (**in whom I am well pleased**) Son of God, identifying with sinful man. By this, everyone knew that Jesus was different. Jesus was baptized to be identified *with* sinful man, but He was also baptized to be identified *to* sinful man.

v. 12 **A voice came from heaven:** It's rare in the Bible when we read that God speaks audibly from heaven, but this is one of those glorious occasions.

· **You are My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased:** What could be more glorious than to have God the Father praise and affirm you publicly?

**And the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove:** This wasn't just a fluttering cloud hovering above Jesus; it had the actual appearance of **a dove**. [Luke 3:22](#) says, *the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him*. It doesn't mean that the Holy Spirit *was* a dove, but appeared **like a dove**. We also know that John the Baptist saw the Holy Spirit coming down on Jesus ([John 1:32](#)). The Holy Spirit is associated with a **dove** because of [Genesis 1:2](#), where the brooding of the Spirit over the waters at creation suggested to some ancient rabbis the action of a dove. Also, doves are gentle, non-threatening birds, they do not resist, and they do not fight back. It represents the gentle, faithful work of the Holy Spirit. This is one of the familiar passages of the New Testament that shows us the entire Trinity in action. God the Son is baptized, God the Father speaks from heaven, and God the Holy Spirit descends like a dove. So far in the Gospel of Mark we see four witnesses, each testifying to the identity of Jesus. What more evidence do we need?

v. 13 **Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness:** After the dramatic appearance of the Holy Spirit at His baptism, the *work* of the Spirit in Jesus was to *lead* Him – rather, to *drive* Him **into the wilderness**. “Mark has used a strange word. ‘The Spirit driveth Him forth’; quite literally, ‘the Spirit casteth Him forth.’ It is the very work afterward employed of the casting out of demons by Christ.” (Morgan)

**And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan:** Jesus was identified with sinners in His baptism. Here He was also identified with sinners in their *temptations*. [Hebrews 4:15](#) reminds us, *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin*.

**Forty** – as in the **forty days** of Jesus in the wilderness – is a number that often shows a time of *testing* or *judgment*. In Noah's flood, it rained for 40 days and 40 nights. Israel was in the wilderness 40 years. Moses kept sheep in the wilderness for 40 years. This is Jesus' time of *testing*.

**Forty days, tempted by Satan:** Matthew and Luke detail three specific temptations Jesus suffered in these days and how Jesus resisted Satan each time by standing on the Word of God. Mark tells us that Jesus faced more than the three dramatic temptations described by Matthew and Luke. This entire period was a time of testing.

**Was with the wild beasts:** Matthew and Luke make no mention of this, but it is significant. In the ancient Greek grammar, the emphasis is on **with**. In other words, Jesus was at peace **with the wild beasts**. This shows two things:

- Jesus is the Second Adam, and like unfallen Adam, He enjoys a peaceful relationship with all the animals.
- Jesus remains the unfallen, sinless one despite all the temptation, with authority over **the wild beasts**.

“These fell creatures saw in Christ the perfect image of God; and therefore revered his as their Lord, as they did Adam before his fall.” (Trapp)

**And the angels ministered to Him:** The sense in Mark is that the **angels ministered to Him** at *the end* of this time of intense temptation. This shows Jesus’ authority, not only over **the wild beasts**, but also over **the angels**. They are His servants.

“Morally victorious, He was Master of the creation beneath Him, and the angels ran upon His errands, for such is the real suggestiveness of the word. Thus He is seen as God’s Man, perfect in spite of the temptation!” (Morgan)