

Mark: 1:4-11

The Significance of Baptism

INTRO:

Last week we started our new series in the gospel of Mark.

We discussed the different audiences and themes between the four gospels.

I also shared with you why we are going through the most challenging and action-packed gospel of the four.

Reminder

Well, "For such a time as this,"— God is inviting us to join Him to do things radically different in reaching people in the Verde Valley.

Now is A Time of Action
- Evangelism

The world is certainly taking advantage of the—"the new normal."

News report

The marijuana industry is embracing change.

Their stores are closed, so what are they doing? Customers can order online and pick up their marijuana curbside.

Other Curbsides
Many more stores have switched to an all delivery model.

~~I'm not making this up!~~

Depending on what state you live in, you can have your marijuana delivered, just like a pizza.

Many states have declared cannabis shops essential businesses—

News story goes on

In other words, they are just as crucial as groceries, gas, and liquor.

How did liquor become essential, just like groceries and gas?

So we are studying an action-packed gospel of Mark today,

because it is my hope and prayer that we become an action-packed Church.

The world is changing around us—if the world can respond quickly with marijuana delivery...

Just think of what we can do as River Bible Church to deliver the best news ever?

Today we're going to address the significance of baptism.

What's the big deal about baptism?

Where did it come from?

Why do Church people get so worked up over baptism?

Why is it so divisive at times?

Maybe you were like me, growing up in a Roman Catholic family, and you were sprinkled,


Or maybe your baptism was a priest pouring water on you as a child.

And then for one reason or another, you find yourself in a Bible-based Church, and they only accept baptism by immersion—

To where your whole body must be immersed by water. Dunked.

What's the deal with that? Legalistic!?

Well, there are deep theological roots for baptism that go all the way back to the second verse in the Bible.

So stay with me, this is going to be fun. 

SCRIPTURE: Mark 1:4-11

1 This is the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (CSB)

2. The prophet Isaiah wrote, "I am sending my messenger ahead of you to prepare the way for you." (GW)

3. "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight." (NKJV)

4. And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. (NIV)

5. People from the whole Judean countryside and all of Jerusalem were going out to him, and he was baptizing them in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. (NET)

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

7. John announced: "Someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater, that I'm not even worthy to stoop down like a slave and untie the straps of his sandals. (NLT)

8. I have baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." (ESV)

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

10. As soon as he came up out of the water, he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. (CSB)

11. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased." (CSB)

This is the Word of our Lord, Amen.

PRAY:

Father, we want to thank you for this online service. We want to thank you for the technology to broadcast your message of hope and life to anyone willing to watch.

My prayer is that you will radically change us.

Father, transform us amid this quarantine. Do whatever it takes to get our attention, Lord God. And allow us the privilege of ministering and proclaiming your good news in drastically different ways than ever before.

I pray that we experience you in a new life-giving way today.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

EXEGESIS:

4. And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. (NIV)

So we see this man —John the Baptizer/ Immerser who was prophesied 400-700 years before he was born.

Now we see his mission statement—



slow

How knowledge not just know about you

*prophecy
God foretold*

It's twofold:

1. To preach a message about the baptism of repentance
2. Repentance leads to the forgiveness of sins. *- Peter w/ God*

Repentance—to repent means more than feeling sorry for your sins.

It's never good to base your life, to base decisions on how you feel at the moment.

As you know, your feelings change from day to day.

If you're a bit more fickle like me, your feelings will change from moment to moment.


A Biblical definition of repentance is "to change one's mind."

Your mind is where it starts.

It's to chose—not feel—to willfully and consciously chose to change your mind from one thing to another.


So when it comes to spiritual things, repentance is about changing your mind— from lies to truth.

Repentance is a reorientation of your opinion on sin and God.

When you read Scripture over and over from cover to cover... 

God renews your mind.

He shows you the seriousness of sin and the holiness of Himself.

And when you start learning about God from God's perspective, everything changes! 

Please know
It doesn't matter what we think about God; it only matters what God says about Himself.

One of the first things you learn is that you been lied to.

The world has lied to you.

That's why the world is now delivering ^{cannabis} marijuana to the front door of its customers.

Because marijuana deadens the pain of life...temporarily.

It's A Band-Aid

We can say the same thing for any other vice.

The world's ways will never fill your soul with happiness.

The world's knowledge of how to get to Heaven will send you straight to hell.

No joke

So this idea of repentance means "to turn" or "to change your point of view."

Secondly, repentance of your sins and lifestyle produces something for you.

Forgiveness by God for God.

You are now at peace with God. And this peace overflows into your life today.

Now, John's baptism is not like your baptism.

The people that John baptized were making a commitment to God through John.

And the commitment was to accept whoever John identified as the Messiah.

Why?

John's baptism is unique. It is grounded in his prophetic office.

Keep in mind John the Baptizer is a preparatory figure.

He is preparing people for God.

his message

It is an affirmation filled with hope.

John

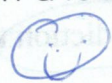
It is a recognition that God Himself is coming to be with His people.



5. People from the whole Judean countryside and all of Jerusalem were going out to him, and he was baptizing them in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. (NET)

↳ we have to admit that we are a sinner

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



Now, have you ever seen somebody wearing camel's hair clothing?

Me either - sounds a bit itchy

Have you ever met someone who's diet was locusts and honey?

Does this description remind you of anyone else in the Bible?

- No coincidences

Elijah the Prophet (1 Kings 17:4, 2 Kings 1:7)

his

This attire signified John as a prophet Almighty God.

Elijah wore something very similar.

Now, why would Mark provide this detail and describe what John the Baptizer ate and drank?

Because he's a prophet, and the coming of the Messiah is not an accident.

- not plan B

Scripture tells us that John's birth was a miracle because his parents were way past the age to have children.

We know that John was supernaturally filled with the Holy Spirit while in his mother's womb,

Jesus called John the greatest man who had lived up to that time.

Moses? David?
Why - Annuncie

What Mark is doing is setting the contrast between a prophet of God and a pastor of that day.

The pastors, priests, and ministers of that day lived large.

They dressed to get respect. They demanded respect, in fact.

John is a walking contradiction to the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees.

Even Jesus asked, "Who did you go to see? Somebody with soft clothes in the middle of the desert?" (Lk. 7:25)

No, man, people with soft clothes live in palaces and have four-course meals.

So John's ministry was a part of God's plan from the beginning.

It's been said that John the Baptizer lived his whole life preparing for six months of ministry—and then he was murdered.

John was the same age as Jesus, somewhere around 30-33 years old at that time.

We don't know how long John actually lived in the desert beforehand, but here's a timely question—

slow

Do you think he got lonely in the desert?

Do you think he was isolated?

Maybe even quarantined?

Do you think the distractions of the world got to John?

That he was worried about the headline news of his day?

Did John live above his means?

Here we go, was John lonely as God was preparing him for his mission—being isolated, alone, and quarantined in the desert?

He may have been alone, but he wasn't lonely.

During our own quarantine, I'm hearing stories of how lonely people are.

With all of our gizmos and gadgets and entertainment, we are a lonely culture.

And I bring all that up to say this...

If your lonely, it is because you're drinking from the wrong well.
 → Christian or non-Christian

cf: Jn. 6:35 Jesus says
 ...Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.
 - spiritual things
 - emotional

If you are lonely right now, is it a possibility that you are trying to satisfy your spiritual thirst— with human effort and resources?

Is it possible that you're putting things in your mind and body that will never satisfy?


The very things you are doing with social media, TV, sex, porn, alcohol, and drugs are the very things that keep you from being known.
 - Keeping God at Arm's length distance -

Sure, those things deaden the pain temporarily.

But, without Jesus, the pain always comes back.

Prayer for that

What you're looking for can't be found at the bottom of a bottle or searching for nirvana in pornography.

The root issue to ~~your~~ loneliness— is a broken relationship with this Jesus that John the Baptizer is proclaiming. 

Psalm 16:11

You make known to me the path of life; (not death) in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your righthand are pleasures forevermore.

If you're lonely, depressed, if things seem hopeless—

What you are looking for is found in the presence of a risen Savior—Jesus.

Was John the Baptizer alone? Yes.

Was he lonely? Absolutely not.

Why? Because He was in the presence of Almighty God!

7. John announced: "Someone is coming soon who is greater than I am— so much greater that I'm not even worthy to stoop down like a slave and untie the straps of his sandals. (NLT)

John is talking about the service of a slave.

At times, a disciple carried his teacher's shoes, but he was not expected to take them off.

Untying the straps of his sandals was beneath a Jew, even a Jewish slave.

He wouldn't do it.

And yet John the Baptizer was eager to do it for the Messiah.

8. I have baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." (ESV)

There is a spiritual transaction that takes place when you repent of your sins and call on the name of the Lord to save you.

Turn = change your mind

This once again was foretold in the Scriptures long ago.

Ezekiel 36:26

And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart.

(u)

Before we call on the name of Jesus to save us, we don't have the capacity to love God and love others. It's impossible.

But, by God's grace, in that spiritual transaction, God saves us, and gives us a new heart that has the capacity to love. *As He loves*

Does that mean we're perfect in loving God and others?

Nope, it means you have to learn what that looks like.

You've got to build spiritual muscle. *-You now join God in His Kingdom-*

Your life is forever changed!

~~You now have a new heart AND a new spirit.~~

You can now commune with God. *-relationship-*

You are no longer an alien and an enemy of God because of your sin, but now you are a child. *His child*

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

Crossroads

This signals the end of Jesus' private life.

It is the beginning of his public life.

10. As soon as Jesus came up out of the water, He saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. (CSB)



Notice the wording, "He came up out of the water."

"To come up out of the water" implies what?

That Jesus had to be immersed in the water, correct?

Here, is the reason why baptism by immersion is so important.

Rather than being sprinkled or using the pouring method.

- BAPTISM IS NOT JUST AT

Immersion was a common practice in the OT, long before it became a Church ordinance by Jesus.

- 1. In the OT, being immersed dealt with being purified. The purpose of purification dealt with Jews being ceremonially unclean.

Being ceremonially unclean was a big deal for the Jew.

- MAKE SURE! SCANDALOUS

- 2. This type of ceremonial immersion— were done in the nude! If a piece of clothing touched the skin, the whole thing was invalidated.

THAT'S HOW IMPORTANT IMMERSION WAS

- 3. Jewish baptisms always required total immersion, and that's because it's an extension of being purified.

John's Baptism ->

Jews don't sprinkle or pour. Those are invalid baptisms.

fish = immersed Jesus

Fast forward to today. We get the word baptism from two words:

Bapto— It means "to dip" or "to dye."

> That's the picture

Baptizo—means to immerse.

Think of taking a piece of cloth, dipping it into the dye to change its color.

And when you change the color, you changed its identity.

The identity of that piece of cloth has been changed forever.

So the reason why baptism by immersion is such a big deal is that it is an outward symbol of an inward reality.

- deep dye

You now have a new spirit and a new heart.

*- the moment you called on the name of Jesus
- believe He is God.*

The person being baptized is also being identified with another person or message or group of people.

Jesus

The Act of baptism

And by doing so, he disassociates himself from his old identity.

- tape of shame

Now He's embracing his new identity. *- new life*

That's why we call it a Believer's Baptism, identifies you with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

Now the question becomes, "Why did Jesus—as God—as the Messiah need to be baptized?"

Jesus didn't need to repent of anything, so what's the deal?

Every major event in Jesus life—

Birth, baptism, transfiguration, death, burial, resurrection, ascension carries theological implications.

Jesus baptism represents 6 things

1. Jesus was baptized to show His obedience. It showed that He would fulfill the law in the OT perfectly.
2. Jesus baptism identified Him as the one that John was proclaiming.
3. Jesus baptism publicly identified Him to the nation of Israel. He was publicly confirmed as the Messiah both verbally and visibly for Israel.
4. It publicly identified Him with the Jewish Believers. All those people who were being baptized by John were able to see God physically!
5. It identified Jesus with sinners. *-personal*

1. 2 Cor. 5:21 God made Jesus who had no sin— to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

1. So Jesus became real flesh and blood so that we could relate to Him. *Personal relationship*

6. He received a special anointing from the Holy Spirit.

Back to verse 10:

He saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. (CSB)

QUESTION

In all the ways that the Holy Spirit of Almighty God, could have revealed Himself,

Why a dove? *- Really?*

Isn't that kind of anti-climatic?

I mean, doesn't an army of angels from the book of Revelation sound cooler and more dramatic?

Well, the first time the Holy Spirit is mentioned in Scripture is all the way back to the second sentence of the entire Bible.

Genesis 1:2 (NLT)

The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

The picture in this verse is of the Holy Spirit— acting like a mother bird hovering over her eggs just before they hatch.

Gen. 1:2 could be translated.

"and the Spirit of God hovered the waters like a dove which hovers her young without touching them."

What's the connection?

Fast forward to Jesus' baptism...

God was clearly communicating to the Jew, from the beginning of time, that this is indeed the Son of God, which is confirmed by the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove from the OT.

Wow!

11. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased." (CSB)

Lastly, we hear the voice of God the Father.

Just as the Shechinah glory is a visible manifestation of God, The Bat Kol is the audible.

So for the first time in the history of mankind, we have all three members of the Trinity together at Jesus' baptism.

PREACH:

If you have called on the name of Jesus, repented from your sins and lifestyle, you are saved.

If you haven't celebrated your new life in Christ, I want to encourage you to let me know, and we will do that as soon as we can gather again.

BAPTISM

→ BAPTISM

This is a celebration, and there is no reason to wait.

Waiting to be baptized is very much a modern cultural thing. You don't see this in Scripture.

Lastly

video

If you are watching this, and you haven't called on the name of the Lord—

What are you waiting for? - That's a question to ask yourself - soul searching

It's a gift of grace. - what specifically do you think you'll lose?

There are no hoops to jump through—the only requirement is to believe that Jesus is God.

Belief change - your mind

And all you have to do is call on the name of Jesus, and tell Him you believe.

PRAY:

Father, I pray for those whom you are calling unto yourself—that are responding today. That they would not harden their hearts. That they are responding to your gift of grace.

And

That they would accept these other gifts that flow from grace—hope, peace, and eternal life with you.

I pray that River Bible Church also responds to the change before us, no matter the cost to us.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Grace Gifts and Offerings:

I'd like to introduce you to Chris & Shannon Musselman.

They are two of our missionaries in Germany.

Six years ago, our missionary, Chris, planted a church in ~~this city~~. He has two co-pastors - one German and one Korean.

They call it Spectrum International Church, and they are working to reach people from many lands who ~~live in the city~~.

Chris and his wife, Shannon, have three children. They can serve because a portion of your gifts and offerings go to missionaries around the world, just like Chris and Shannon.

We now have three ways to give:

1. PO Box 4540 Cottonwood AZ 86326
2. Online via our website at RiverBible.org / Give
3. Or text 928-421-4030. Give 1

Okay, River. I pray that you are staying in touch with one another.

We have:

Online prayer every Wednesday at 12 noon

Online Bible Study Thursdays at 6:30 pm

I love you. Peace and blessings to you.

