

Preparing the Way for the King Mark 1:1-13

- I found myself sitting alongside a man in a crowded bus a few months ago. We got talking... He said, "I like my rugby"... so I mentioned Israel Folau and his "post".. The man (Lenny) was aware of it.. I said that Israel was essentially giving us a warning out of his concern for fellow human beings about our eternal destination.. There is a heaven and a hell and the only way to escape hell is by giving our lives to Jesus. The man alongside me said "I believe in 'God' but I don't believe in Jesus"..
- I went onto say that I believe that Israel Folau's statement was true. and that Jesus is God's Son (Mark 1:1)... and that there were many witnesses to the person of Jesus and what He said and did... including His death and resurrection.. (1 Corinthians 15:3,4)...our conversation continued... 1 Peter 3:15...
- The Message of Mark—was written to reach out to Romans and encourage Romans believers and prove beyond doubt that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God (Mark 1:1) ..

Three Things about the Gospel of Mark

1. The _____. Scholars suggest it was written approx. 60 AD. Mark was the first to write down an account of what Jesus did—His life, death and resurrection. What a privilege for us to read it! 2 Timothy 3:16,17.
2. The _____. You can read this Gospel quickly. The Gospel is neither a discussion nor a debate," said Dr. Paul S. Rees. "It is an announcement!"
3. The _____. If you want a story with pace then read Mark. Mark was writing principally to the Romans—a people of action.

In this opening chapter Mark shares 3 important things about Jesus...

A. The Servants _____ Mark 1:1-11

- How does Mark identify this Servant? He records the testimonies of dependable witnesses to assure us that Jesus is all He claims to be.. We use witnesses in a court of law today to verify truth..
- A few years ago I had just finished CRE lessons at a school and was putting gear into the boot of my car when suddenly I heard the squeal of car tyres and the horrible bang of two cars colliding .. I was an eyewitness... The police asked me for my account of the accident....
- 1 Corinthians 15:3,4.. The apostle Paul said... *From what I have received I pass onto you..*
- Lee Strobel story... How many "eye balls" were there? Important for us too...



1. First Witness: _____ (v. 1).

(v. 1). *The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God*

- It is likely that Mark was eyewitness to some of the events that he wrote about. He lived in

- *contin...* Jerusalem with his mother, Mary. Their home was a meeting place for believers.. (Acts 12:12). Scholars believe that Mark was the young man described in Mark 14:51–52
- “Gospel” - good news - local context—proclamation of a military victory to the Romans! Mark uses this background to announce the greatest victory... Jesus— Son of God - took on the forces of Satan, sin and death and defeated them! A battle has been fought and now we can announce victory in Jesus Christ! Through Jesus we can gain forgiveness .. We don’t present a philosophy —we present Christ.—the Messiah, the Son of the Living God...
- Example of a victory by Christ—Angus Buchan... If we have given our lives to Jesus we have a story to tell about a victory too.... Be prepared to tell our story.... In Bible College we all had to present our story in 3 minutes—before the whole College.... 3 aspects...
 - BC.. life with out Christ eg fear of death
 - How? our coming to know and follow Jesus.. a sinner needs a Saviour Acts 3:19. Giving our lives to Jesus
 - Now.—what following Jesus means to me .. eg, forgiveness, set free (no more “crossing fingers”), joy, hope, purpose...



2. 2nd witness: the _____ vs 2,3

Vs 2.. as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way” - vs 3.. “a voice of one calling in the desert’ Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him”

- Mark cites two quotations from Old Testament prophets, Malachi (3:1) and Isaiah (40:3) In ancient times, before a king visited any part of his realm, a messenger was sent before him to prepare the way.—repairing the roads and preparing the people .
- There was an expectancy (Luke 3:15) — there had been no God sent prophets for 400 years—since Malachi... now pax Romana—relative peace, extensive road system, common language... “*In the fullness of time God sent forth His Son*” Galatians 4:4..

3..3rd witness _____ the Baptist vs 4-8

John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.⁵ The 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.⁶ John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.⁷ And this was his message: “After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

- Mark’s story does not begin with Jesus but his cousin John. He lived in a terrible desert—about 70 km long and 25 klm wide. In the OT it is sometimes called “Jeshimmon” - means “the devastation”. John was not a city dweller—he learnt to listen to God in the wilderness. It is interesting to note that many of the great leaders of the Bible spent time in deserts... We may have wilderness experiences too—persevere, listen, grow in maturity! Romans 5:3,4.

- The prophet prepares the way... Malachi 3:1.. *I will send a messenger who will prepare the way*... John the Baptist came to prepare people's hearts, his task— to play second fiddle...eg Gerry Bedan did preparation for Billy Graham.. Am I prepared to play “2nd fiddle”...to be the person behind the scenes preparing for another's ministry.? Servant heart! “Chief servant”
- John was a revival of prophecy after 400 years — “*Thus says the Lord*”... He spoke with authority. In his dress, manner of life, and message of repentance, John identified with Elijah .. 2 Kings 1:8

What was John's mission?

- There is a big place for feeding the hungry and clothing the naked and providing education by the local church—but what is the biggest need??



4. Our greatest need is forgiveness of _____

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

- What was needed to demonstrate response to this message? “Repent and be baptised”. Preachers still must proclaim this message—repent of your sins and be baptised . ,Acts 2:38
- **Repentance** ... Μετανοέω... Change your _____ change your direction.. it is not just feeling sorry . Repentance is more than the emotions—it is the mind saying it is wrong and I don't want to do it again—turning away from sin and giving my life to following Jesus.



- **Baptism**.. The word means to “dip” or “plunge” or “_____”.. John said Jesus would baptise them with the Holy Spirit.. *Vs 8 I baptize you with^l water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.*”
- John's baptism with water prepared a person to receive Christ's message. John's baptism demonstrated repentance, humility and willingness to turn from doing wrong things. (vs 6)
- Baptism in Jesus' Name symbolises us being forgiven and cleansed of sin and rising anew in Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit. (vs 8).



- John's appeal concerning baptism was not to babies but to believers. You can't tell a baby to repent and be baptized—only people who recognize their guilt and need of cleansing... Matthew 28:18-20... baptism is a step of obedience for believers... have you taken this step?

- **Vs 7.. *I am not worthy* ..** For slaves the job of untying shoe laces was second from the bottom. The bottom level was washing feet!! Are we happy to serve Jesus this way? Colossians 3:23... eg of a servant heart... "I will have the cleanest toilets in all of China"...

4th witness: The Father and the Holy _____ vs 9-11.

⁹ *At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.* ¹⁰ *Just 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"*



- John **baptized Jesus in the Jordan River**. . The Greek prepositions εἰς ("into," v. 9) and ἐκ ("out of," v. 10) tells us it is baptism by immersion. Jesus' baptism probably occurred near Jericho. He was about 30 years old at this time (Luke 3:23).

Three unique features of Jesus' Baptism

- The _____. The heavens opened.. Illustrating a close connection between the Father and Son, between heaven and earth, during the earthly life of our Lord. This was the anointing with the Spirit for Jesus' three-fold ministry of Prophet, Priest, and King,
- D.L. Moody said "If the Holy Spirit who came down on Jesus and enabled Him to do what He did is available to me and to other people today then what could that person not do with the same Spirit" - Moody said "I intend to be that man"...For us... Ephesians 5:18..
- A Voice—*You are my Son, whom I love; with You I am well pleased.* " vs 11... God quotes Himself from the Old Testament. *You are My Son whom, I love* comes from Psalm 2:7... which in the context of Psalm 2 is a coronation service for a sovereign. In Isaiah 42:1.. "In *whom I am well pleased*" - the context is not referring to a sovereign but to a servant. Jesus is both King of kings and Servant of servants...
- The Temptation - vs 12-13... *At once the Spirit sent Him out into the wilderness,* ¹³ *and He was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted^d by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended Him.* After the high point of His baptism the spiritual battle started and if you love Jesus and serve Him you are in it... The evil one has been defeated on the cross of Calvary but we are still involved in mopping up the skirmishes...Ephesians 6:10-20...
- *Jesus was tempted in every way that we are and yet with out sin...* 1 Corinthians 10:13

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵ **"The time has come," He said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"**

**Israel Folou's message... repent... and turn to Jesus... A warning offered in love to us all.
Have you given your life to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord?**