**THE BEGINNING OF THE THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS**

Mark 1:1-20

Key Verse 1

 “The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God”

Introduction



 Mark is the shortest of the synoptic gospels and was written about 64 A.D. The key personalities of this book are Jesus Christ and His Twelve Disciples. It was written by John Mark who accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their mission trips. It is well known that Mark wrote this Gospel with the help of Peter for the Romans. The purpose of the Gospel of Mark is about the beginning of the good news to show that the Lord Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God who was sent to suffer and to serve in order to rescue and restore mankind. As Mark 10:45, Jesus came to the world to serve many souls, not to be served. Thanks to Jesus’ servantship, twelve disciples were raised up as gospel workers to serve all people on earth. For this reason, the gospel of Mark is a “busy” book. One of the key words is “immediately.” We will see Jesus as a busy servant who takes actions in serving many. Praise Jesus!

1. Read verses 1-3. What does verse 1 tell us about Jesus? How was John’s coming prophesied and fulfilled? (2-4) Describe his lifestyle and the response of the people. (5, 6) What did John testify about Jesus? (7-8)

1-1, Read verses 1-3.

 The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24217a)] the Son of God,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24217b)] 2 as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”—3 “a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’ 4 And so 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[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24224e)] water, but he will baptize you with[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24224f)] the Holy Spirit.”

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1-2, What does verse 1 tell us about Jesus?

***The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God,***

* Because of sin, human beings have been unable to come to God and live in his reign. Our sins have reigned over us and taken us to eternal condemnation.
* We could not find the way to the kingdom of God but just lived a cursed and meaningless life without any hope.
* But Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God came from the kingdom of God and opened the way to the kingdom of God.
* Through Jesus’ death, the kingdom of God has opened and we can come to his kingdom through Jesus.
* Through Jesus, the long time hostility between God and human beings had been removed and we can freely come to God.
* Through Jesus, we can come to the Father God freely as his loving children. Truly Jesus is the good news because he opened the way to the kingdom of God.
* These days there are not much good news around the world. The world today really needs the good news that gives people real peace, hope and joy.
* But from the very beginning of his gospel, Mark declares the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God.
* The good news is Jesus, the messiah. Throughout Mark’s gospel, the author attests that Jesus is the good news. Praise Jesus!

1-3, How was John’s coming prophesied and fulfilled? (2-4)

***2 as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”—3 “a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’ 4 And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.***

* Isaiah prophesied about the forerunner of the Messiah. In the ancient world the forerunner of king went ahead of king and prepared the way and proclaiming, “You king comes! Bow down to him!”
* According to this prophecy, the forerunner would come to prepare the Messiah’s way. John the Baptist came in the wilderness as the forerunner.
* He preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. John said to those who came to him, “Repent and be forgiven!”
* For example, when tax collector asked John the Baptist what they should do to repent, he said, “Don’t collect any more than you are required to.”
* To the soldiers, he said, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”
* True repentance is to stop doing what is sinful and wrong, and turn to God for his forgiveness. It involves practical actions that are to stop sinning and turn to God.
* Repentance is the way to prepare the way for the Lord. The good news begins with repentance.

1-4, Describe his lifestyle and the response of the people. (5, 6)

 ***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.***

* John the baptist’s life style may remind us of Elijah in the Old Testament. He lived in the wilderness and delivered the message of repentance very boldly.
* The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem came to him, repented of their sins and were baptized.
* This beautiful work of God teaches us that people want to be free from the burden of sins. No one in sin will be happy and peaceful.
* People in sin may look outwardly alright, but inwardly suffer under the weight of sins. They are eager to repent of their sins and have a fresh new beginning in Jesus Christ.

Acts 3:19 reads,

 “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord…”

* Let us humbly turn from our sins to God for the forgiveness of sin so that we can have times of refreshing from the Lord.

1-5, What did John testify about Jesus? (7-8)

***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[***[***e***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24224e)***] water, but he will baptize you with[***[***f***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24224f)***] the Holy Spirit.”***

* After asking people to repent, John introduced the Messiah who would be powerful and who baptize them with the Holy Spirit.
* Here we learn that after repentance, we must come to Jesus who is powerful to forgive our sins with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. May we humbly repent of our sins and accept Jesus newly and be baptized by the Holy Spirit.

2. Read verses 9-13. What happened when John baptized Jesus? (9-11) What happened right afterwards? (12,13) How did these two events prepare Jesus for his Messianic ministry?

2-1, Read verses 9-13.

 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.”

12 At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, 13 and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24229g)] by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

2-1, What happened when John baptized Jesus? (9-11)

 ***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.”***

* Here Mark simply states that Jesus was baptized by John, leaving out the dialogue between John and Jesus.
* But according to Matthew’s gospel, John was surprised at Jesus’ coming to him to be baptized and said, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”
* Then Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness (Mt 3:14-15).
* Jesus was baptized by John, not because Jesus had something to repent but to fulfill all righteousness.
* Here all righteousness means in particular God’s way of doing his work and history.
* Jesus began his gospel work not in his own way but in God’s way humbly, following God’s will, that is, to succeed John’s work by being baptized by him.
* At Jesus’ baptism, God tore open the barrier and anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit. This scene reminds us of the curtain of the temple torn in two from top to bottom when Jesus died on the cross for the sin of the world (Mt 27:51).
* As early mentioned, heaven was closed because of mankind’s sin. But Jesus came to reconcile sinful mankind to God by taking away the sin of the world.
* When Jesus was baptized by John humbly, God was pleased and baptized him with the Holy Spirit.

2-2, What happened right afterwards? (12,13)

2-3, How did these two events prepare Jesus for his Messianic ministry?

***12 At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, 13 and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted[***[***g***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24229g)***] by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.***

* Then Jesus was sent to the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. Jesus overcame the temptation with the living words of God.
* Jesus was identified with sinners in His baptism. Now He was also identified with sinners in their temptations for 40 days.

Hebrews 4:15-16 read,

 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. **16** Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

* Also Jesus was with the wild animals and angels attended Him. Before the fall of Adam, human being was at peace with animals and angels served them according to God’s absolute will and purpose.
* Jesus is the good news in that He will resume all original status as originally created perfect human beings in accordance with God’s will and purpose. Praise Jesus!

3. Read verses 14-20. After John was put in prison, what did Jesus do? (14) What was Jesus’ message? (14b, 15) Who were the first disciples? (16, 19) What did he call them to do? (17) How did they respond? (18, 20)

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3-1, Read verses 14-20.

 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!”

### Jesus Calls His First Disciples

16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 17 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” 18 At once they left their nets and followed him.

19 When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. 20 Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

3-2, After John was put in prison, what did Jesus do? (14)

***14 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.***

* As background for this portion of the passage, John was put in prison because he rebuked King Herod for his sin of adultery. But Herod hardened his heart, put him to dungeon and later beheaded him. The time was dark.
* At that time, Jesus didn’t go to Herod’s palace and try to rescue John from prison. Rather He went to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.
* Jesus didn’t get into political or military battle, but a spiritual battle like our Venezuelan brothers and sisters.
* Jesus fought the dark times by means of proclaiming the good news of God. Jesus knew that what people really needed was the gospel.

Romans 1:16 reads,

 The gospel is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes.

3-3, What was Jesus’ message? (14b, 15)

***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!”***

* Jesus meant that God’s promise to send the Messiah to save people had finally come through his public messianic ministry.
* In short, he meant that the Messiah who would bring the kingdom of God has fully come. So Jesus urged them to repent and believe the gospel, the good news.
* Some people think that their time to enter the kingdom of God is far away. So they want to enjoy their sinful life until they become 70 or 80 years old and then repent and believe the good news.
* But God’s time for us is the time when we hear God’s words. Jesus says, “The time has come. The kingdom of God has come near.”
* God’s time for us has come and is now. We are to respond to Jesus by repenting and believing the good news.
* Just as John the Baptist urged people to repent and believe Christ the Lord, Jesus also urged people to repent and believe. To obtain the kingdom of God we are to repent and believe Jesus the good news.

3-4, Who were the first disciples? (16, 19)

***16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 19 When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets.***

* The first disciples were Simon, Andrew, James, and John. However they say that it was not the first time for Jesus to call them. In John 1, Jesus called them before. But they might have been part time followers so far.
* Jesus called them to commit them to follow Jesus. They were common men without credentials in the world. Jesus met them as they labored as common men.
* Jesus chose these disciples not for who they were, but for what Jesus could do through them.
* Jesus might have seen them as good candidates for His disciples in that they were successful fishermen in the Galilean sea.
* They would be together with Jesus in the difficult ministry of winning lost souls. They had courage, diligence, patience, humility, energy, and tenacity. They were ready to engage in hard manual works instead complaining or quitting.
* There were two kinds of people who came to Jesus. One was the crowd and the other, his disciples.
* Those who belong to the crowd come to Jesus whenever they need something from Jesus such as healing or comfort. Jesus welcomed them too.
* But Jesus did not entrust himself to them because they come and go as they please. They are gone as soon as their needs are met.
* They have no interest to learn of Jesus. They are very self-centered people. But his disciples are Christ-centered people.
* From the beginning they commit themselves to follow Jesus. They are lifelong students and learners of Jesus.
* They are willing to leave everything behind in order to follow Jesus. Jesus commits himself to them and raises them as shepherds of God’s flock.
* May the Lord bless our growing children and Bible students to have desire to become Jesus’ disciples!

3-5, What did he call them to do? (17)

***17 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”***

* It is interesting to note that Jesus called fishermen to fish for people. When Jesus said, “I will send you out to fish for people,” he meant, “You know how to catch fish. Good! Follow me and I will teach you how to fish for people.”
* Fishing for fish needs to know where the good fishing spots are; they know how to persevere day and night; and their hard labor and patience are paid off when they catch a large number of fish.
* In the same way, fishers for people should know the art of fishing. Fishers of people must know where the good fishing spots are; they must know how to persevere day and night, overcoming all kinds of hardships, rejections and failures. We are to learn how to fish for people from Jesus.
* Jesus is the best one to fish for people. He fished all kinds of people from all walks of life.
* He fished a wayward Samaritan woman, a greedy tax collector Levi, an intellectual Pharisee Nicodemus, a hard-core religious fanatic Paul.
* God calls all Christians to learn of Jesus and grow to be fishers of people to win many souls for Christ.

3-6, How did they respond? (18, 20)

***18 At once they left their nets and followed him. 20 Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.***

* Their response was immediate. Without delay they responded and obeyed Jesus’ calling. They left their father. It means that they follow God’s will instead of their father’s will.

**Conclusion**

Jesus is the good news in that He opened the new way for us to come to God our Heavenly Father. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” May we accept Jesus’ calling, “Come, follow me,” and become fishers of people like Jesus who showed a good example as a hard worker for God’s kingdom purpose.

**One word: The beginning of the good news!**