

Mark | The Making of Christ Followers

03 Authority Given to Jesus

August 27, 2017

Let me remind you that the bible is 66 cohesive books. The bible is meant to be read as one big story with many different stories that help unfold the big story. The bible loves to have a conversation with itself, revealing more and more of the story and bringing to completion God's promises, and at times filling out what those promises actually meant.

Read Mark 1:9-11

I. Introduction: The Scene

Jesus appears now in Mark's gospel on the heels of John the Baptist preparing the way by proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sin; that is only fully realized in Jesus' baptism with the HS. The very next story in Mark's prologue is Jesus, who is mightier than John, getting baptized by John.

Sooooooo, why is Jesus getting baptized? Is he in need of forgiveness? Does he need to repent for some deep rooted hidden atrocity? Mark waste no time in getting to Jesus whom his gospel is about and choses this story to introduce him into the story. The contrast between v 8 and 9 could not be anymore staggering; John prepared the way for Jesus, the might one, and now Jesus appears in the wilderness, specifically the river Jordan, getting baptized by John, Oh, the irony!

Mark must not feel any tension with bringing Jesus on the scene through getting baptized. I do, but he sure does not...but the other gospel's do. Luke smooths this out by given some

details between a conversation that John has with Jesus saying that he, John, should be baptized by him, Jesus. Mark seems to want that tension to hang. Why would the mighty one seek out a baptism of repentance that was dependent on his own baptism? That is the question that Mark skillfully builds with tension. John declared a might one is coming, who he cannot even untie the straps on his sandals. He enters and gets baptized by John. Why??

Well, Mark spends a good bit of emphasis on the next two verses in explaining all that happened that day and therefore providing a significant answer to the why of Jesus baptism. This section, verses 9-11, is of utmost importance to Mark's understanding of the God-man. As one scholar put it, "...the passage marks the high point of revelation in the prologue to Mark's Gospel and provides the indispensable background for all that follows."¹ Lets look at the next few verses and see all we learn about Jesus, the mighty one.

II. Coming out of the water...

- A. *Heavens tear*...a glorious rending of the heavens as Jesus comes up out of the water. This is such a significant moment that the heavens open to declare the importance of the it, none of this had occurred just a few scriptures before when the many where being baptized, there is something different here. The heavens open because this one who is getting baptized embodies all that the people should be, he is stepping in with the many...This is not the only time that Mark describes something tearing, this is not the only time in his gospel he will talk about a glorious scene much like this one. The other use of tear, rend is at the end of Mark's

¹ William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), p 58.

gospel in 15:38. Jesus breathed his last breath, “*And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.*”

- B. *Spirit descends like a dove*...once the heavens open the Spirit descends on Jesus. What an incredible scene this must have been...heavens open the Spirit comes visible looking something like a dove and rest on Jesus. What is going on here? This imagery is firmly fixed in the OT
1. Is 11:2, *There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him*...how did Isaiah say that the branch from Jesse would be identified, the spirit would rest upon him
 2. Is 42:1, *Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.*
 3. The Messianic Servant says in Is 61:1, *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound*

This event is placing Jesus as the servant whom God would bring forth to bring justice, to defend the weak, to judge correctly with righteousness...he would be identified by the Spirit coming upon him. This is the anointed one who would go forth to bring good news to the poor, bind up the broken hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and open the prison doors to those who are bound. This is what is associated with the Spirit coming down upon the servant of

God, who now, like we saw last week, would act like YHWH and pour out that Spirit *Gen 1:2?

- C. *God speaks*...a voice from heaven can only be God's voice piercing through the air to declare that this mighty one is his Son! These are God's word, not an estimation from man, but the words of God himself.

This man is no ordinary man, he is the son of God, the only worthy one to walk the path he is about to walk. This is what Ps 2:7 was referring to that we look at several weeks ago. Psalms 2 speaks of the success of God's established King—the anointed one, the Messiah—that indeed he would go forth even in the rejection from others. He was a King, that was God's Son, whom we are to trust and surrender underneath his rule and reign because he is the Messiah, and here in this moment God speaks to say he is here! But then there is another illusion at play here.

Not only was Is 42:1 alluded to in the Spirit descending but also a declaration that this servant, God is well-pleased with. Isaiah 42 presents a servant who achieves justice for the nations by patient faithfulness, under the direction of the Spirit.²

Ps 2 an anointed King, Is 42 a suffering servant of God. This mighty one being baptized by John willingly, will embody both, he will be a King who uses his power to lay down his life under the judgment of God. He is the only one who can actually walk the path of John's baptism.

² R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark, NIGTC* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), p 8, 81

- D. The entire Trinity has shown up to this event...major importance.

III. Why all these illusions?

- A. Mark is saying take great confidence and delight in our Savior...he is worthy, he has been given authority to establish God's rule and reign as God's Son, he stands in the gap for us and oh don't worry, just as the heavens tore opening up to him, the will open for us through him, the veil will be tore. Jesus is here, the dog days are over

IV. Therefore...

- A. Jesus' baptism is to establish him as the only worthy sacrifice for our sins. The passing of the torch to the ONE who can fulfill the role that Israel, the many, could not. The ONE who could come under the judgment of God with true repentance—without sin. He tears apart sin and brings us into a relationship with his Father, who becomes our Father.

The rending of the heavens, the descent of the Spirit and the declaration of God do not alter Jesus' essential status, but serve to indicate the cosmic significance of Jesus' submission to the Servant-vocation and confirm God's good pleasure in his Son.³

- B. Jesus identifies with us sinners as the only true repentant Son of God worthy to offer forgiveness.

³ William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974).

He associates himself with sinners and ranges himself in the ranks of the guilty, not to find salvation for himself, not on account of his own guilt in his flight from the approaching wrath, but because he is at one with the Church and the bearer of divine mercy.⁴

⁴ William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974).