

Discussion Questions

The Time Has Come: The Gospel of Mark

These questions are designed to invite reflection on today's Bible passage and life application of the themes introduced in today's sermon.

Week 2: Beloved Child

Mark 1:9-15

1. Think of someone you have looked up to or wanted to be like. What were the qualities or abilities you admired? Did becoming like them seem possible or attainable? Why or why not?
2. Recalling last week's message, what two claims does Mark make about Jesus at the beginning of his Gospel? What additional detail do we find in Mark 1:1? What does this imply about Mark's Gospel and Jesus' ministry?
3. Today's passage describes three events in rapid succession. What are they? Together, what do they provide a summary of?
4. Referring back to Mark 1:4, what was John's baptism for? Is there anything strange about Jesus going to John for baptism? What two phenomena accompany Jesus' baptism? As Son of God, does Jesus really need to see and hear these two phenomena?
5. What do we learn about the nature of the one true God in the account of Jesus' baptism?
6. What happens immediately after Jesus' baptism? As the Son of God, does Jesus need to be tested? Would you expect this experience to really be that much of a test?
7. Now let's consider that the baptism and temptation aren't primarily for Jesus, but for *us*. According to John, what is the difference between his baptism and Jesus' baptism (Mark 1:4). If Jesus doesn't need to see the Spirit or hear the Father, for whose sake are these phenomena?
8. Who is the active agent in Christian baptism? What two things become objectively true of us in our baptism into the Christian life?
9. Based on what we know about Jesus' two natures, how can we be sure Jesus' temptation was real and profound? What does Jesus' time of testing teach us about what we can expect as part of the Christian life? What two resources enable Jesus to withstand every test of Satan? Do we have the same resources?
10. What two realities does Jesus announce at the start of His public ministry? In what ways can we – both with our words and our lives – introduce others to the two realities Jesus announces? What two commands does Jesus give? What are some ways you a. see yourself following these commands; and b. inviting others to follow them?
11. When we consider the sequence of these three accounts – Jesus' baptism, temptation and the start of His ministry – what can we conclude about the "sequence" of the Christian life? *How* are we able both to withstand temptation and enter into the ministry of the Kingdom of God?
12. *Why* are we able to persevere through testing and persist in Kingdom ministry? If the Christian life is less about what we do than who we become, what statement from today's passage best captures who we are in Christ?

Pray: For the Holy Spirit to equip you to resist temptation and persist in Kingdom ministry; for the Father's reassurance: *You are my child, whom I love. With you I am well pleased.*