

Mark: Eyewitness to History

February 27-March 3

Monday, February 27 - Mark 1:1-13 The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God,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 water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."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."¹² At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness,¹³ and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

Tuesday, February 28 - Mark 1:14-28 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!"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.²¹ They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach.²² The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.²³ Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out,²⁴ "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"²⁵ "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!"²⁶ The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.²⁷ The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him."²⁸ News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

Wednesday, March 1 - Mark 1:29-45 As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew.³⁰ Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her.³¹ So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.³² That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed.³³ The whole town gathered at the door,³⁴ and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.³⁵ Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.³⁶ Simon and his companions went to look for him,³⁷ and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!"³⁸ Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come."³⁹ So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.⁴⁰ A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."⁴¹ Jesus was indignant. He reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!"⁴² Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.⁴³ Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning:⁴⁴ "See that you don't tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them."⁴⁵ Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.

Thursday, March 2 - Mark 2:1-12 A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. ² They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. ³ Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. ⁴ Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." ⁶ Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ⁷ "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ⁸ Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? ⁹ Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'?" ¹⁰ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, ¹¹ "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." ¹² He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Friday, March 3 - Mark 2:13-28 Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. ¹⁴ As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him. ¹⁵ While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶ When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹⁷ On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." ¹⁸ Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, "How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. ²⁰ But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast. ²¹ "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. ²² And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins." ²³ One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. ²⁴ The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" ²⁵ He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? ²⁶ In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." ²⁷ Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸ So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

Getting to Know Me

Who is your favorite speaker, or someone you would drive a long way to hear?

Into the Bible

Mark begins with John the Baptist, what reason would he have to leave out the birth of Jesus?

John proclaimed a “baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” The Bible is clear, God forgives those who repent. John insisted on baptism. In Jewish life, this was new and different. No matter if you have been a part of this church a short time or a long time - you have seen baptisms of infants, children, students and old adults. What significance does baptism hold for you?

What do you make of the description of John’s clothes and diet? (Mark 1:6)

Application

John was sent ahead of Jesus and Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness all before Jesus’ began his public ministry. When has God prepared you before using you to do his will?

How is God preparing you now?

Mark reported Jesus’ clear, urgent message. “Now is the time! Here comes God’s kingdom! Change your hearts and lives.” “Come, follow me!” The Common English Bible renders the Greek word *metanoia*, often translated “repent,” with the phrase “change your hearts and lives.” The Greek literally meant “to turn around, change directions.” Jesus didn’t call people to a onetime emotional event, but to a lasting choice to live in a new way. What are some of the chief ways Jesus has led you to change your heart and life?

It’s tempting to dismiss those first-century Pharisees as narrow and blind, without realizing how easily we become like them. Christian singer Todd Agnew’s song “My Jesus” included these challenging lines: “My Jesus would never be accepted in my church, ‘Cause the blood and dirt on His feet might stain the carpet.” What comfortable customs, habits or assumptions might Jesus challenge in your workplace, neighborhood or church today?