

**Valley Bible Church**  
**Sermon Notes for April 24, 2016**

**Prepare The Way**  
**Mark 1:1-8**

Background:

- Book was written by Mark aka John Mark
- Church history states he received his information from Peter
- Book was probably written to Roman Christians to establish their faith in historical life and work of Jesus
- Also written to provide encouragement for suffering believers in the church at Rome

I. The purpose of the book (1:1)

*1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.*

- The significance of “the beginning of the gospel...” is twofold:
  1. It intentionally matched the Roman histories written of their Roman leaders
    - Spoken of Emperor Octavian in 9 B.C. “the birthday of the god was for the world *the beginning of joyful tidings* [gospel/good news] which have been proclaimed on his account”
    - Retrospective, looking back on good news of what had already taken place
    - Mark was presenting good news of someone greater than the Emperor
    - Since Mark wrote gospel to Rome, they probably caught this intentional wording
  2. The word “gospel” connected to the Messianic hope of salvation and redemption in the Old Testament (Isaiah 52:7-10)
    - After long anticipated OT hope of good news, Mark said it came in Jesus Christ
    - “Christ” = Anointed One or Messiah
    - “Son of God” = Divine origin
    - Balance in the presentation of the God-Man, Jesus Christ
      - 1 Corinthians 2:1-2 "And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

## II. The prophecy of preparation (1:2-3)

*2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, 3 the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"*

- John begins with Old Testaments's beginning of the Messiah—that is, His preparation
- Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3 prophesy 3 things regarding Messianic messenger:
  - Messenger will go before the Messiah (1:2)
  - Messenger will work/minister in the wilderness (1:3)
  - Messenger will prepare the way of the Lord (1:2-3)Example: Kings have people prepare and announce their arrival at certain places
- Messenger would not be in Jerusalem Temple or Rome as for a King
- Mark could have gone a lot further back into prophetic history...
  - Hebrews 1:1-2 "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world."
  - 1 Peter 1:10-12 "Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look."

## III. The prophet of preparation (1:4-8)

### A. His ministry (1:4-5)

*4 John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.*

- Luke 16:16 "The Law and the Prophets were until John..."
- John's baptism=Not ritual Jewish washings but one time act
- John's baptism resembled one time washing of Gentile embracing the true faith
- Jordan River east of Jerusalem

*“and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins”*

- True life change (1 Thess. 1:9; Matt. 3:7-8)
- Jews being covenant people still needed to come to God through repentance and faith just like the Gentiles
- Sin was confessed and baptism illustrated true repentance
- Result was forgiveness of sins
- God’s direct response to true repentance is forgiveness

*5 And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.*

- Judea, Samaria and Galilee regions
- Not just being baptized but confessing their sins
- Not sacrificing of more offerings
  - 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

B. His appearance (1:6)

*6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey.*

- Common Desert Diet = locusts and wild honey
- John the Baptist actually lived in the desert
- Leviticus 11:21-22 distinguishes locusts as clean
- Wild honey found in the wilderness
- Description resembles Elijah the prophet
  - 2 Kings 1:8 "They answered him, ‘He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist.’ And he said, ‘It is Elijah the Tishbite.’"
- Elijah was expected to come before the Messiah
  - Malachi 4:5 "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes."

C. His message (1:7-8)

*7 "And he preached, saying, ‘After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.’"*

- Perhaps the most menial task a slave could perform
- Even Hebrew slaves were not required to do this task
  - John 3:30 "He must increase, but I must decrease."
  - Matthew 11:11 "Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

8 *'I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'*

- This is the current experience for believers today
  - 1 Corinthians 12:13 "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit."
- Need of all mankind is a new heart
- He will put His Holy Spirit in us
  - Ezekiel 36:26-27 "And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules."
  - Ephesians 1:13-14 "In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory."