



WEEK OF 08/23/26

HE'S HERE; IT'S TIME; NOW TURN AND TRUST!

MARK 1:1-15

Silence (1-2 minutes)

Sit silently for a minute as a way to center your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to help you listen to and receive God's Word.

Opening Prayer (2-3 minutes)

Read: Mark 1: 1-15

Devotional

Over the next several months, we will be studying the Gospel of Mark. The Gospel of Mark is a heralding of Jesus's ministry on Earth written almost like a critical alert for future readers. Critical alerts, such as those we receive on our phones or TV's, inform us of important information to get us prepared and ready, such as severe tornadic weather. In a similar way, Mark gets our attention by bringing us immediately into the start of Jesus's adult ministry. So emphatic is Mark about getting our attention, the word "immediately" is observed over 42 times in his gospel writing alone.

1. When was the last time you received a critical weather alert or update, and what was your response? Did you pay attention to the alert and prepare, or ignore it? Why or why not?

Mark 1: 1-8 || The first several verses of Mark's gospel opens with a quote from Isaiah 40:3 and John the Baptizer in the wilderness. John was baptizing people who came from the country-sides and cities confessing their sins. John preached about "He who is mightier than I" who would come after him and who would "baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

2. What could be some of the reasons people would travel from all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem to go to the wilderness? Why would they confess their sins to a man in the wilderness?
3. Imagine yourself as one of those city or country people, who heard about a man in the wilderness who was proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. What would your initial thoughts be about what was happening in the wilderness? What would compel you to go to the wilderness? Would John's appearance have any impact on your willingness to listen to him?

Mark 1: 9-13 || Jesus came to John to be baptized by John. But Jesus wasn't coming to be baptized for His sins because He was the sinless Son of God. No, Jesus joined the baptism line to be baptized as a substitute for our sins. "Immediately" after Jesus came up out of the water, two things happened to Jesus- God proclaimed His approval of Jesus before any accomplishment by Jesus, and Jesus was driven into the wilderness.

4. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21 and 1 Peter 3:18. How do these two verses reflect how Jesus is our substitute?
5. What may be the significance of the two immediate things that happened to Jesus after He was baptized (vs. 10-12)?

Mark 1: 14- 15 || Jesus's first words in verse 15 signify the fulfillment of time, and that the Kingdom of God was at hand. He proclaimed repentance and belief in the Gospel. The BIG IDEA for this week is: **He's Here; It's Time; Now Turn and Trust!** There's no time like the present to respond to this critical alert.

6. How does hearing Jesus' first words in the Gospel of Mark stir your heart and mind?
7. What are one or two things that you could meditate on from this week's passage that would encourage your spirit and cause you to turn and trust Him? He's Here; It's Time.

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for coming to Earth to proclaim the gospel of God. Thank you, dear Heavenly Father and Holy Spirit, for your presence and pronouncement of your great love for your Son before He had done any earthly deed worthy of recognition. Thank you, God, for loving us right where we were at and are at and calling us to yourself. You loved us in our sin and died for us so that we may live for you. Teach us to proclaim your love and truth, because you are here, it is time, help us to trust you everywhere you lead us. May you glorify yourself in us. In Jesus name, amen.

Share Prayer Requests (10-15 minutes)