

**The Gospel of Mark**  
**Part 3**  
**Jesus' Baptism & Temptation**

# TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

2023.11.26



A publication of **U DISCIPLE**, the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11  
 Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Triangle Community Church aims to be a "transforming church". We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to "discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." Since "Talking Points, Walking Points" is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to "dive deep" too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled "Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time", are perfect for private reflection.

## Questions for Reflection or Discussion

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why?**
- Read Mark 1:9-13. If you were there, **which** do you think would impress you more—**and why?** [1] the voice from heaven affirming Jesus or [2] the sky ripping open and a dove landing on Jesus

But not everybody was enthralled with Jesus—read Mark 2:7!

How do you think Jesus' opponents might have explained away the marvels at his baptism?

Was there ever a time when you explained away the clear evidence for Jesus' deity? Tell us about it.

- God's declaration, "*You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased,*" comes from Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1. What else do we learn about the promised Messiah from those passages from hundreds of years before Christ?
- Read Romans 5:12–21 and make a chart of all the similarities and dissimilarities between these two "Adams".

Similarities Between the Two "Adams"	Differences Between the Two "Adams"

- Read 1 Corinthians 15:21–22. Is it "fair" for us to be ruined by the "first Adam"? Why or why not? Is it "fair" for us to benefit from the actions of the "last Adam"? Why or why not? Explain.
- In which "Adam" are you? How do you know?

# Sermon Summary

## Key Text: Mark 1:9-13

In our study last week Mark introduced us to John the Baptist. From Malachi 3 and Isaiah 40 he identified John as the Messenger that God sent to prepare His people for the coming of God the King. In preparation for this King's coming, John called people to repent of their sins and to turn back to the God of their forefathers. Water baptism was the symbol of repentance. People from Judea and Jerusalem streamed out into the wilderness, where they were confessing their sins and submitting to John's baptism. They recognized their spiritual need and could not meet it on their own. For that, they looked to John and to his message of repentance. But John made it very clear that he was not the One in whom they should put their hope. He was not the coming God King; he was only a messenger. Who is this God King whom John said he was unworthy to even untie his sandals?

And what happens after the baptism is equally shocking: the sky was ripped open, the Holy Spirit descended like a dove upon him, and God spoke to him from heaven, saying, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased"—an announcement of love and affirmation drawing upon Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1. Jesus' mission is God-approved and Spirit-empowered! And note the Trinitarian nature of God revealed in Jesus' baptism: God the Father declares Jesus' eternal, divine Sonship as the divine Holy Spirit descended to empower him! So Jesus isn't just any Jewish servant—he's the unique Son of God who came from heaven to die for the sins of the world.

Equally shocking is the first thing the Holy Spirit did after descending on Jesus: he drove him out into the wilderness to be tested by Satan! The wilderness was not friendly territory. It was demonic. Before Jesus could begin his public ministry, he had to undergo a time of testing. Adam, who represented the human race, had been tested by Satan—and he failed. How would Jesus, "the second Adam" (see Romans 5), fare?

Observe the great difference between the circumstances of Jesus' temptation and those of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve were tempted by the Serpent in the midst of a lush garden where they had every imaginable food at their disposal. Their stomachs were filled. But Jesus' temptation took place, not in a garden paradise, but in a desolate wilderness. Unlike Adam and Eve, Jesus' human nature was ravaged by hunger. He is in the wilderness, without human companionship, weak and ravenously hungry. These were Jesus' circumstances when Satan came to him.

But this is where the dissimilarity between the two temptations ends and the similarity begins. The point of both tests was exactly the same. The issue presented to our first parents and to Jesus was this: "Are you going to believe and obey God's Word?" God had declared that Jesus was his well-beloved, well-pleasing Son. So Satan asked with malice, "If you really are the Son of God, shouldn't you be in a palace, feasting?" But Jesus was committed to not breaking his fast until his Father in heaven said to. With Satan's second temptation, Jesus made it clear that he didn't need to jump off the temple to have the assurance that God would protect Him. In his third and final temptation, Satan essentially invited Jesus to be a partner with him; he is the prince of this world, and the power of the air, and he offered to share some of that power with Jesus. "Just give one slight genuflection, and I will give You all of the kingdoms of this world!" We don't understand a fraction of the stress Jesus experienced in these temptations, but he withstood everything Satan threw at Him, despite his weakened and vulnerable state. In frustration, Satan left—until an "opportune time".

At the time Mark wrote, many Christians were hiding in the catacombs of Rome, realizing that they too may soon experience their own wilderness sufferings. But they also knew that if they were led to the arena, they had a Savior who had himself endured great temptation and suffering. And He promised that He would never leave them, nor forsake them. In Jesus, these beleaguered believers had a Champion who had resisted Satan's temptations, and had stayed the course. In his temptation, Jesus shows us what his ministry will be all about: the defeat of Satan and the inauguration of a great salvation!

We too can have full confidence that Jesus—the divine-human Messiah, who succeeded at every point in which we have failed—understands our temptations and sympathizes with our weaknesses (Hebrews 4:15). We have every reason to place our full confidence in Jesus. He has done for us what we could not do for ourselves. And God gives us the encouraging promise that he will empower us to trust and obey too (1 Corinthians 10:13).

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

*The trinitarian nature of God was revealed at Jesus' baptism.*

*Tertullian (AD 155-220) clarified the Bible's teaching on the Trinity, namely that there is one God who eternally has existed as three equal persons, Father, Son, and Spirit. Let's explore this uniquely Christian doctrine.*

**Monday**—How do each of the following passages reveal the deity of:

- the Father? (2 Corinthians 1:3)
- the Son? (John 10:30-33; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Titus 1:1-4; 2:11-13; 3:4-6)
- the Spirit? (Acts 5:3-4)



**Tuesday**—How do the following passages reveal that the Father, Son, and Spirit are distinct persons?

- Titus 3:6
- Acts 5:3-4
- Acts 15:28; Romans 8:27; 1 Corinthians 2:11
- Ephesians 4:30

**Wednesday**—The Bible insists that there is only one God:

- Deuteronomy 6:4-5
- Deuteronomy 4:35, 39
- Isaiah 45:5, 21-22

**Thursday**—Yet the Old Testament *hints at* the doctrine of the Trinity:

- Genesis 1:1-10
- Genesis 1:26
- Psalm 45:6-7
- Psalm 110:1 (cf. Matthew 22:41-46)

**Friday**—The New Testament *develops* the doctrine of the Trinity:

- Matthew 3:16-17
- Matthew 28:19
- 2 Corinthians 13:14

**Saturday**—Take time to marvel at your triune God, as revealed in Psalm 110.