

The Arrival of the Long Awaited Kingdom

By Matthew Black, Pastor

Text: Mark 1:9-15

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Series: Mark (Introducing Jesus)

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Introduction: Open your Bible to the book of **Mark 1:9-15**. This morning the title of our Message is: "The Arrival of the Long Awaited Kingdom".

Abigail Adams said in a letter to her husband, as he struggled to found this nation: "Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could".¹ Abigail Adams was right. In our nature, we all want to do what we want to do. We all want our own way. That's why this world is in such a mess. We have rejected the rule of our Creator.

Since the beginning of time at the fall of Adam, God has sent His prophets to tell us that Christ would come to earth and make everything right. The Old Testament refers to this day as "the Day of the LORD". The Messiah would come, and all would be made right.

There are really two phases to the Kingdom of God: the Cross and the Consumation. Or you could say, Redemption and Renewal. In the current time, Christ is mercifully calling out sinners and transforming them from sinners to saints. But in the renewal, Christ will come and destroy everything as well as everyone who has not come to know Him. And then He will renew the earth. Today Christ reigns in mercy. But when He comes again, He will rule in Judgment and make everything that is wrong right.

We come to **Mark 1:9**, and Jesus Christ is revealed to be the Messiah at His baptism. This is the first time that we have seen Him in the Gospels since He was 12 years old in the Temple. ***The most remarkable thing about Jesus' first thirty years is that they were unremarkable.***

John comes announcing that the long awaited Messiah has arrived! All know that He has come to establish His Kingdom. Most are expecting a physical kingdom. They were not wrong to expect it. The Bible clearly teaches that one day Christ will rule on this earth as King of kings. But the kingdom first comes in the hearts of men. It is not until Christ's second coming that He comes to rule and reign. This morning we are going to see the arrival of the long awaited kingdom.

And as we consider Christ's kingdom, we are going to ask ourselves three questions:

1. Will you identify with the King of kings in every area of your life?
2. Will you contend with all that opposes Him and resist the wicked one's temptations?

¹ Abigail Adams, letter to her husband, John Adams, March 31, 1776.

3. Will you embrace His message of repentant faith and proclaim it to every creature?

We are going to follow in Jesus' footsteps this morning. Let's begin by reading the account of **Mark 1:9-15** that describes the very beginning of His ministry. Let us stand for the reading of God's Word.

Mark 1:9-15, "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. 10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: 11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. 13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him. 14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Jesus Christ, God in human flesh is about to begin His ministry. John the Baptist announced His arrival. "He's here! Prepare yourselves—the LORD, Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel has come. Emmanuel is here!" He quotes from **Isaiah 40:3**, "Prepare ye the way of the LORD [יהוה], Yahweh".

Jesus is about to begin His ministry. He's going to announce that the long awaited kingdom of God is at hand.

How shall He be introduced to the people? How shall He be authenticated? How will people know that Jesus is the long awaited Messiah? Here is the King of the long awaited Kingdom. This is David's son.

He's come to announce this kingdom. It is a kingdom where there is a perfect worldwide rule. How will He reveal Himself to Israel? Here we see Jesus at His baptism revealing Himself as the Triune God.

- I. The **Mission (Identity)** of Jesus is **Authenticated**, made public, at His **baptism**. He is the King come to tell the world that He will one day rule and reign on this earth. They had better receive Him. Look at **Mark 1:9**, "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan".

Lots of people surrounded John the Baptist—perhaps thousands were there already. We read in **Matthew 3:13-15**, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him."

A. Jesus Christ identifies Himself with **sinful mankind**.

1. ...Through the John's **baptism of repentance**. He's coming to save mankind. But in order to save mankind, he must perfectly obey the will of

the Father, including partaking in this baptism of repentance. This is a shock to John. Jesus had nothing to repent of.

We read in **1 John 3:5** that Jesus Christ "was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin". John was shocked! He tells Jesus: "I have need to be baptized of you" (**Matthew 3:14**). He who needed no repentance was to submit to a baptism of repentance. Why would Jesus be baptized? It was His mission to rescue sinful humanity. In order to do this, he had to perfectly obey God. This baptism was what God had commanded of all people through John. Christ knew no sin, yet gave to this baptism of repentance. What a fitting way to begin His ministry, utterly given over to the Father's will. He humbled Himself and lived as a humble man in all His perfection on this earth. He sought not his own will, but only to please the Father! In this way He was fulfilling "all righteousness".

Application: Many in ministry want the praise and the prominence of ministry. I would venture to say from this passage that any ministry truly blessed by God must follow the ministry of Jesus. We must shun the limelight and humble ourselves as God's ministers. Jesus humbled Himself at His baptism in the Jordan. He came to "fulfill all righteousness"—perfect obedience to the Father's will.

All followers of Christ must make themselves public for Christ!

2. John identifies Jesus as the one who rescues sinful man!
Verse 9, "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan".

We read in **John 1:29**, that as Jesus was walking toward John to be baptized, John identified Him in a very special unique way. It was a way in which everyone knew He was the Messiah.

Imagine the multitudes that were pressing in on John to be baptized, and then in the crowd, John sees Jesus is there to be baptized. We read in **John 1:29**, "John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world".

John identifies Jesus as the one who rescues sinful man! He says, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"! Why does John call Jesus the "Lamb of God"? He's referring to the OT sacrificial system, specifically **Isaiah 53:7**, which says Jesus "is brought as a lamb to the slaughter" and verse 6, "the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all". What king dies for a criminal?

In John we have John the Baptist shouting "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (**John 1:29**). "It would appear therefore that the demand of Jesus to be baptized by John signifies his solemn resolution to take upon Himself the guilt of all those for whom he was going to die" (Hendrickson, Mark, 42).

Jesus begins His ministry with water baptism, and he concludes His ministry by the baptism of death on the cross. Referring to the Cross, Jesus said in **Luke 12:50**, "... I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"

Jesus is to bring in the kingdom of God on earth. He must "save His people from their sin" (**Matthew 1:21**). His water baptism is reflective of His baptism into death for us.

Application: Jesus identified with sinful humanity in order to save sinful humanity. Are you willing to identify with Him? Are you willing to take up your cross and follow him? He entered the baptismal waters to identify with you. He was perfectly obeying the Father on your behalf. Will you identify with Him? Will you follow Him if it costs you your reputation? Will you follow Him if one day it may cost you your life?

The world hates Jesus Christ. **John 15:18**, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you."

B. Jesus Christ identifies Himself with the **Holy Trinity** at His **baptism**—He is worthy to be worshipped, because He is part of the triune Godhead.

Verses 10-11, "And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: 11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The purpose of the baptism was to announce and to obey. The Trinity is revealed at His baptism. There is a sacred zeal in God's language, "he saw the heavens open", literally, "the heavens as they were being rent", ripped or torn open like a garment! The Father had something to say!

He was God in human flesh. Jesus Christ is the "the image of the invisible God" (**Colossians 1:15**). **Colossians 1:19**, "...it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell". He is "the express image of his [the Father's person]" (**Hebrews 1:3**).

Therefore Jesus could say in **John 8:29**, "the Father hath not left me alone: for I do always those things that please him."

Application: Jesus Christ did everything that pleased the Father. Our purpose is to please the Father, and not to please ourselves, our employer, or our friends, family or neighbors. **All followers of Christ must make themselves public for Christ!**

You are either a Christ-follower or the devil's disciple. You cannot be both.

God is pleased with His Son at His baptism. Christ is revealed as a member of the Triune Godhead!

Transition: But now, just as all heaven is poured out on Him in power, all hell's forces come upon Him and begin to tempt Him for forty days and forty nights.

The Spirit of God leads Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted forty days and nights. These tests of the wicked one

All followers of Christ will be suffer satanic attack for Christ!

II. The **Ministry** of Jesus is **Attacked** at His **temptation**.

Verses 12-13, "And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. 13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him".

A. Jesus Christ was subject to the temptations of the devil as any man. He is tested in the desert, having been "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin" (**Hebrews 4:15**).

Application: We must expect satanic attack if we are following in Jesus' footsteps. Do not be surprised when you are severely tested. If He did not spare His son, do you think He'll spare you?

Transition: Our enemy masquerades as "an angel of light". He prowls about like a roaring lion. He hates your soul. Satan is pure evil. What you must do is resist him. How do you do that? By submitting to the Word of God!

B. Christ's chief weapon if you look at Matthew 4, is the **Word of God**.

Three times He is tempted, and three times Christ replies, "It is written".

Application: Do you know the Word of God? If you are not studying the Word of God on a daily basis you are going to be taken by Satan. You will be trapped by discouragement and pressure that will cause you to sin if you are not constantly in the Word.

- **Psalm 119:9**, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word."
- **Psalm 119:11**, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."
- Jesus said, in **John 17:17**, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

C. Some temptations can seem **unbearable**. But remember two things.

1. Christ sympathizes with you. **Hebrews 2:18**, "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour [HELP] them that are tempted."
2. There is always a way of escape. **1 Corinthians 10:13**, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with

the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

All true followers of Christ will live a life of repentant faith and preach this entrance into the Kingdom!

III. The **Message** of Jesus is finally **Announced** in **Galilee**—the home of the Gentiles! Soon He's going to call His twelve disciples. But before that, He begins preaching.

Just as John preached repentance so Jesus preaches repentance.

Verses 14-15, "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

A. Look at the **recipients** of Christ's message. Christ doesn't begin in Jerusalem. He begins in Galilee—this was the "wrong side of the tracks" where many of the despised Gentiles lives. It was called "Galilee of the Gentiles". Of course Isaiah had predicted that Jesus would begin His ministry there. **Isaiah 9:1b-2**, "...in Galilee of the nations. 2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."

B. Look at the contents of Christ's message.

1. Christ announces the Kingdom. Jesus arrived on the scene "preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God" (**verse 14**). This isn't just *any* kingdom.

a. Let's consider its **nature**. What kind of kingdom is it? Is it physical? Was Jesus' mission to overthrow Rome?

It's not a kingdom of man. It's not a physical kingdom. It is the "kingdom of God". The "kingdom of this world" is not yet the "kingdom of our God". But that day is coming. There is coming a day when the seventh angel will sound His trumpet and shout, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (**Revelation 11:15**).

It begins to take place when the "**time is fulfilled**". It is a kingdom that begins to take its full root at the very end of the world. It is prophesied and predicted in all of the Old Testament, but Christ comes in the "fullness of time" when "the time is fulfilled" to bring in the kingdom.

Jesus in His first coming is announcing His future coming world dominion. It is breath taking. Christ comes humbly in His first coming to prepare people for His Second Coming!! He comes to redeem in His first coming, but in His Second Coming He will destroy the earth (**2 Peter 3:10-12**) and create a new heaven and earth.

2. What was the message of Christ's kingdom? Repent and believe!

- a. Repent! Unless a person repents, none of the glorious truths of Christ's incarnation, His death, or His resurrection will benefit them.

Without repentance you are left in your sins.

Why is repentance so important? Repentance prepares a person to believe the Gospel. It is a deep sorrow for your sins with a desire to forsake your sins and this world and turn to Christ in His righteousness.

A person must have a genuine desire to turn from his own old crooked ways!

Repentance is not reforming your life—we must be born again for that! Being born again is the miraculous work of God in their life. God takes something old and broken and dirty and makes something new. He takes the dead and makes it live.

But first we must repent.

Isaiah 55:7 says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Spurgeon said, "The gospel...is not a proclamation of tolerance for sin, but of deliverance from it. It contains no single promise of forgiveness to the man who goes on in his iniquity".

Turn from your sins today and trust in Christ.

- b. The second part of the message is to believe. That is saying, I can't change, but Christ can change me!

Faith is trusting that all that Jesus says is true! It is to give your life unreservedly to Him as Master and Lord. He is now at the controls of your life.

Stop living for this world of rebellion. Stop living with yourself at the controls of your life. The kingdom of God is at hand. I am very soon coming to rule the world. Turn to Me! Live for Me! Very soon the whole world is going to recognize Me as the Exclusive King of the universe. The heavens declare my glory. All creation sings my praises! Why are you not singing my praises? Why do you disdain Me? Why do you live as if you are deaf to My words? Repent! Why do you seek your own way? Why do you promote yourself and serve your own desires as if you are king? You have attempted to usurp God's throne. Turn from your way of living.

Conclusion: Matthew 6:33, Jesus says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

Are you in the kingdom of Christ? As we have considered Christ's kingdom, we reconsider these three questions:

1. Will you identify with the King of kings in every area of your life?

2. Will you contend with all that opposes Him and resist the wicked one's temptations?
3. Will you embrace His message of repentant faith and proclaim it to every creature?