**Now is the Time to Repent**

**By Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Mark 1:9-15**

**Wednesday Evening**

**July 25, 2018**

**9 It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.**

Saints, the coming one was identified as Jesus. Although born in Bethlehem, Jesus moved to Nazareth when he was a young boy and grew up there (Matthew 2:22-23). Nazareth was a small town in Galilee, located about halfway between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea.

**Matthew 2:22-23**

22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. 23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

The city was despised and avoided by many Jews because it had a reputation for independence. Nazareth was an unlikely hometown for so great a king as Jesus. Yet even Jesus’ hometown demonstrated his humility and identification with ordinary people.

**If John’s baptism was for repentance from sin, why was Jesus baptized?**

While even the greatest prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel) had to confess their sinfulness and need for repentance,

Saints, Jesus didn’t need to admit sin—he was sinless!

**John 8:46**

“Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”

**Hebrews 4:15**

“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin”

**1 John 3:5-6**

5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. 6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

Saints, although Jesus didn’t need forgiveness, he was baptized for the following reasons:

**(1) to confess sin on behalf of the nation**

**Isaiah 6:5**

“So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts."

**Nehemiah 1:6**

“please let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. Both my father's house and I have sinned.”

**Ezra 9:2**

“For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, so that the holy seed is mixed with the peoples of those lands. Indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this trespass."

**(2) to fulfill all righteousness in order to accomplish God’s mission and advance God’s work in the world;**

**Matthew 3:15**

“But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness…”

**(3) to inaugurate his public ministry to bring the message of salvation to all people;**

**(4) to show support for John’s ministry**

**(5) to give us an example to follow**

Jesus, the perfect man, didn’t need baptism for sin, but he accepted baptism in obedient service to the Father, and God showed his approval. We need this same attitude of humility, submission to God, and dedication to servanthood.

**10 And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.**

Saints, apparently the action of the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove was a sign for John that Jesus was the Messiah. The “splitting” of the heavens presents God’s intervention into humanity in the human presence of God in Jesus Christ. It was as if the heavens rolled back to reveal the invisible throne of God

**Isaiah 64:2**

“The consuming fire of your glory would burn down the forests and boil the oceans dry. The nations would tremble before you; then your enemies would learn the reason for your fame”

The dove is used as a symbol for the Holy Spirit. However, it is not the bird itself that was important, but the descent of the Spirit like a dove to emphasize the way the Holy Spirit related to Jesus. The Spirit descending portrays a gentle, peaceful, but active presence coming to indwell Jesus. In the same way, since Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit, he is available to us as well.

**11 Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."**

Saints, the Holy Spirit descended and a voice came from heaven proclaiming the Father’s approval of Jesus as his divine Son. That Jesus is God’s divine Son is the foundation for all we read about Jesus in the Gospels. This voice came from the heavenly realm that had been briefly “split open”

The voice said,

**“You are my beloved Son.”**

Jesus Christ has a unique relationship with God because he is God’s one and only Son.

The phrase “I am fully pleased with you,” means that the Father takes great delight, pleasure, and satisfaction in the Son. Jesus did not become the Son or the Messiah at this baptism. Jesus already had his divinity from eternity past.

The opened heavens, the dove, and the voice revealed to John the Baptist that Jesus was God’s Son, come to earth as the promised Messiah to fulfill prophecy and bring salvation to those who believe.

In this event, we see all three members of the Triune God together—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the Godhead means that God is three persons and yet one in essence. In this passage, all three persons of the Godhead are present and active. This is one of God’s incomprehensible mysteries.

Other Bible references that speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are Matthew 28:19; Luke 1:35; John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 2:18; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-5; and 1 Peter 1:2.

**Luke 1:35**

And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God”

**John 15:26**

“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me”

**1 Peter 1:1-2**

“elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied”

**12 And immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness.**

Saints, Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit, takes the offensive against the enemy, Satan, by going into the lonely and desolate wilderness to fight temptation. The word for compelled is very forceful in the Greek, conveying the meaning of “thrown out” or “cast out.”

(Mark used the same word to describe Jesus driving out demons, as in 1:34, 39.) This does not imply that Jesus was reluctant, but rather that God’s Spirit was intensely motivating him to go. As with Jesus’ disciples, the Spirit may have in mind to test us in order to prepare us for greater service.

**13 And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.**

Saints, Jesus remained alone for forty days; Matthew and Luke add that Jesus fasted during that time (Matthew 4:2; Luke 4:2). The Gospels of Matthew and Luke describe in more detail the temptation endured by Jesus.

Satan is an angel who rebelled against God. He is real, not symbolic, and he is constantly working against God and those who obey him.

Satan tempted Eve in the Garden and persuaded her to sin; he tempted Jesus in the wilderness and did not persuade him to fall. The verb being tempted describes continuous action because Jesus was tempted constantly during the forty days. Jesus’ personal victory over Satan at the very outset of his ministry set the stage for his command over demons throughout his ministry, but it did not dissuade Satan from continuing to try to ruin Jesus’ mission.

The wilderness was a dangerous and desolate place, inhabited by wild animals. The wilderness regions of Palestine had animals such as boars, jackals, wolves, foxes, leopards, and hyenas. Mark is the only Gospel writer to mention this, pointing out the hostile nature of the wilderness where Jesus spent forty days being tempted. That angels took care of him in no way lessens the intensity of the temptations that Jesus faced. Angels, like these who waited on Jesus, have a significant role as God’s messengers. These spiritual beings were involved in Jesus’ life on earth by:

**(1) announcing Jesus’ birth to Mary, (2) reassuring Joseph, (3) naming Jesus, (4) announcing Jesus’ birth to the shepherds, (5) protecting Jesus by sending his family to Egypt, and (6) ministering to Jesus in Gethsemane.**

From Jesus’ temptation we can learn that following our Lord could bring dangerous and intense spiritual battles. It warns us that we won’t always feel good; there will be times of deprivation, loneliness, and hostility. It also shows that our spiritual victories may not always be visible to the watching world.

Above all, it shows that we must use the power of God to face temptation, and not try to withstand it in our own strength.

**14 Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,**

Saints, Mark mentioned the arrest of John the Baptist as merely a signal for the ministry of Jesus into Galilee, his home region. Luke explained that John was arrested because he publicly rebuked King Herod for taking his brother’s wife. John’s public protests greatly angered Herod, so he put John in prison, presumably to silence him.

**Matthew 14:1-12**

1 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the report about Jesus 2 and said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him." 3 For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife.

4 Because John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." 5 And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. 6 But when Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod. 7 Therefore he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. 8 So she, having been prompted by her mother, said, "Give me John the Baptist's head here on a platter."

9 And the king was sorry; nevertheless, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he commanded it to be given to her. 10 So he sent and had John beheaded in prison. 11 And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. 12 Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

**15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."**

Saints, the Old Testament prophets often spoke of the future Kingdom, ruled by a descendant of King David, that would be established on earth and exist for eternity. Thus when Jesus spoke of the time and the presence of the Kingdom of God, the Jews understood him to mean that the Messiah had come to fulfill or inaugurate his long-awaited Kingdom. Jesus reassured them that God was in sovereign control. He had begun to act in a new and decisive way.

**Matthew 3:2**

and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

**Matthew 4:17**

From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

**Acts 2:38**

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 20:21**

testifying to Jews and Greeks alike about repentance to God and faith in our Lord Jesus.

**Galatians 4:4**

But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,

**Ephesians 1:10**

as a plan for the fullness of time, to bring all things in heaven and on earth together in Christ.

**Photo of the King of Kings**

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace." '**