

Proof of the Messiah's Role -- Mark 1:9-13

Introduction, outline

- Scripture Reading: Mark 1:0-13; Matthew 3:12-4:11
- Teaching text: Mark 1:9-13 (NASB95)

9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

10 Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; **11** and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased." **12** Immediately the Spirit impelled Him *to go* out into the wilderness. **13** And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him.

- Mark skipped over Jesus's childhood and started immediately with Jesus's public ministry. But before that, there are two things he could not skip - Jesus's baptism and His temptation. These are proofs of Jesus' identity as the prophesied Messiah - the Savior and the King. They prove that He is qualified to accomplish the gospel of salvation.
- Outline:
 - Title: Proof of the Messiah's Role
 - 1. The Proof from His Baptism (vv 9-11)
 - 2. The Proof from His Temptation (vv 12-13)

The Proof from His Baptism (vv 9-11)

- "In those days": referring to verse 2-8 when John the Baptist is baptizing people in the wilderness.
- "Nazareth": A small town relatively unknown. When Nathanael heard Jesus was from Nazareth, his reaction was, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46). However, even this humble origin, is to fulfill the messianic prophecy in the Old Testament. (Matthew 2:23)
- "was baptized by John": John's baptism is the baptism of repentance (verse 4). Why would a sinless Jesus need to be baptized by John? John himself realized how improper this is and wanted to prevent Him (Matthew 3:14). But in order to "fulfill all righteousness", Jesus received John's Baptism (Matthew 3:15). What does it mean to "fulfill all righteousness"?

The basic meaning: righteousness is the moral standard that God requires of man. It means perfect obedience to all of God's will. So, clearly, God's will was for Jesus to be baptized, and Jesus obeyed. If Jesus did not get baptized, He wouldn't have fulfilled all righteousness

according to God's perfect requirement, and wouldn't have been able to provide salvation to sinners. (Philippians 2:8)

The deeper significance: Baptism foreshadows Jesus's sin-atonement sacrifice, that he will bear the sins of all believers and go through a very special baptism, that is, death on the cross (Mark 10:38, Luke 12:50). Similarly, a key point of believers' baptism today is to bear witness to Jesus's sacrifice for sin (Romans 6:3-4)

“Immediately coming up out of the water”: All baptism in the Bible is by immersion. There is no sprinkling. Immersion symbolizes complete cleanse of the whole body, and it symbolizes rebirth from death. Neither of these can be represented by sprinkling.

- “saw heavens opening”: echoing Isaiah's prayer - “rend the heavens *and* come down” (Isaiah 64:1). It implies Isaiah's prophecy of the Gospel is beginning to be fulfilled.
- “Spirit like a dove descending upon Him”: Not that Jesus did not have the Holy Spirit up until now. This simply is a visible sign to show that Jesus is the Messiah. One of the key characteristics of the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament is to have the Holy Spirit and to rely on Him.

Isaiah 11:2 “The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.”

Isaiah 42: 1 “Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one *in whom* My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nnations.”

Isaiah 61:1 “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord has anointed me

To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners”

- “voice came out of the heavens”: verse 10 is visual testimony, verse 11 is audible testimony. Verse 10 is testimony from God the Spirit, and verse 11 is testimony from God the Father.
- “You are My beloved Son”: The Father said this not to others but to Jesus so as to confirm to Him that He is the beloved Son of God.

Psalms 2:7 “I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me: ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.’”

From the beginning, He has testimony from the Father, knowing that He is the beloved Son of God. So, we see Him always in prayer and intimate communion with the Father. What this kind of loving relationship produces is a life of perfect obedience, even in the most difficult situations.

Application: Christians, likewise, find their motivation for obedience in the testimony of the Father's love. Both "beloved" and "son" are words applied to Christians. It is this testimony of love that produces a life of obedience.

John 15:9-10 "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. **10** If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."

The Proof from His Temptation (vv 12-13)

- "being tempted by Satan": This is the very reason for Adam's fall which brought the entire humanity under the curse of God (Genesis 3). Man cannot undo the curse of sin on his own. To revert the curse of sin, man must go back to the beginning, to the original cause of the curse, to the very root of all problems, that is, the temptation of Satan. If Jesus is the Messiah, he must prove that he can break the curse at the root level, that is, to overcome Satan's temptation in human flesh, perfectly.

Romans 5:19 "For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous."

1 Corinthians 15:21-22 "For since by a man *came* death, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. **22** For as in Adam all die, so also in [a]Christ all will be made alive.

A person is either in Adam or in Christ. The difference between Adam and Christ is clearly seen in how they handled Satan's temptation. That's the theological significance of Jesus' temptation.

- "Immediately the Spirit impelled". The Greek word for "impelled" describes a very strong force, often used in the bible to describe casting out demons, or driving people out of the synagogues, or out into the outer darkness where there's weeping and gnashing of teeth. Jesus is under total control of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's power on Him is so great that it almost feels like He's forced and cannot help it.

Application: On those days when your spiritual alertness is very high, you wake up in the morning and are immediately impelled to read the Word of God. Or, when your soul is heavily burdened with troubles, you are impelled to your knees to pray. Sometimes, the work of the Holy Spirit is so powerful that it makes an obedient believer feel like he's almost forced to obey.

Romans 8:14 "For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

- "the wilderness": The baptism was in the wilderness, here is also wilderness. What's the difference? The next verse says Jesus was with the wild beasts, indicating this place is far away from human civilization. Compared to this place, the previous wilderness is like an oasis.

Here is the wilderness of wilderness. Contrast this with the situation Adam was in when he was tempted in the Garden of Eden. There was no lack of anything, but he still fell into sin.

- “Forty days’: The grammar in the original text suggests that throughout the forty days, Jesus was being tempted by Satan continuously. The three temptations recorded in Matthew and Luke are the final climax, the final attempts from Satan after fighting with Jesus for forty days with no success. Can’t imagine how many times Jesus was tempted exactly. Everyday, Satan was using all his tricks to get Jesus to do his bidding against the Father’s will. If Jesus wavered for just one second on one smallest thing, he would’ve become a sinner like us who’d need to be saved rather than providing salvation for sinners.
- “angels were ministering to Him’’: How did Mark know this? Peter told him. How did Peter know? Obvious from Jesus’ own testimony. God wanted Jesus to see that angels were ministering to Him. He wants believers to know that too.

Hebrews 1:14 “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation Angels...?”

***Summary Application:** Is there something of the life of Christ in these verses that you can live out?*

When you receive the testimony of God’s love through faith, knowing you are a beloved child of God in Christ, striving to abide in His love through obedience, you are thus living out, to an extent, the intimate Father-son relationship as shown in Jesus’s baptism.

When, tempted to sin, you stay alert and pray and do not give in, trusting in God’s way to guide believers today - the Bible, seeking God’s will through the Bible, knowing you have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the ministry of the angels so that you have no excuse to fall into sin, and when you overcome temptations this way, you grow in your knowledge of Christ, for you are living out the triumph over temptation which was lived out by Jesus.