

1- Those That Serve

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; 2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. 5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; 7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. 8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

Today we begin a journey through the Gospel of Mark. Mark presents to us Jesus as the Servant. I have entitled this series, *Mark, "Learn to Serve."* Mark's account shows Jesus serving and focuses on Christ serving others. There is one word in the original Greek language used in this gospel that sets the tone. The word is found 78 times in the NT and 39 of these are in Mark. It is translated immediately or straightway most of these times. This showed the urgency or perhaps the natural inclination of Christ to serve by His actions.

Learning to serve is a critical aspect of our Christian faith. Why? It is almost impossible to self-centered when you are genuinely giving yourself in service to others. It is something that Christ modeled for us. Chuck Swindoll said, in his introduction to Mark in the Living Insights Study Bible:

...If Jesus is our model, then servanthood is our method...if servanthood is the method, then people are our ministry...If people are our ministry, then involvement is the means... p 1044

Let's learn to serve! We look today at three that served. Those being Mark, the writer of the gospel, John the Baptist, the one who introduces us to the Messiah, and Christ the ultimate model of servanthood.

I- Jesus Christ, the Servant:

Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Mark introduces us to the Messiah in the first verse. A servant must serve so Mark sets forth for us the mighty works of Christ to prove that He was the Messiah with His acts. He was the promised Servant from God.

Mark records for us nineteen miracles performed by the Lord Jesus. Eight of these were performed as He served by healing individual of diseases. The theme verse for this series is *Mark 10:45*. The *HCSB* translates this verse, *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life--a ransom for many.*" His other miracles recorded in Mark show His power over nature, demons and even over death.

Notice the testimony of John in *Mark 1:7 ... There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. 8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.* So who was this man John?

II- John the Baptist, the Surrendered Servant:

John was the son of Elizabeth and Zechariah. He was the one called to be the forerunner of the Messiah. *Mark 1:2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*

This was prophesied by both Malachi and Isaiah. *Malachi 3:1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me... Isaiah 40:3 The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*



Sermon Series by Dr. Edgar Pierce



Mark 10:45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Mark 1:6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey. While much of today's society would buffoon him and would look down on him he was a servant. He served as God called. Jesus's words about John were a glowing commendation.

Matthew 11:7-11 NASB As these men were going away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 "But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who wear soft clothing are in kings' palaces! 9 "But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and one who is more than a prophet. 10 "This is the one about whom it is written, 'BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.' 11 "Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist! Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. John was a man surrendered to serve. It cost him his life but still he served.

III- Mark, the Recovered Servant:

There is one more that we need to see of those that serve. I call him the recovered servant. Mark, the writer of this gospel we begin a journey into today. Mark, also known as John Mark, is a recovered failure.

Have you ever failed? Made a bad decision? Shirked on your responsibilities? Let others down and disappointed them and yourself? Well that makes you qualified to be a servant. Mark, began great, failed miserably, but was recovered gloriously.

He grew up under a godly influence. **Acts 12:11-12** And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. 12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

Mark was chosen to go with Paul and Barnabas to help with the work of spreading the gospel. **Acts 12:24-25** But the word of God grew and multiplied. 25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.

Now that is a servant. Oh, but wait a minute there are a couple of other things. **Acts 13:13** Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem. John Mark deserted the cause. He failed to do his best to complete the task. Paul was so disappointed that he refused to take him on the next mission. It caused Paul and Barnabas to part ways as well.

But wait a moment. In Paul's letter to Timothy we see the recovered servant. **2 Timothy 4:10** For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

Again Paul felt the sting of desertion. Demas had left him. This probably brought back all those bad feelings of the past concerning John Mark. Have you been disappointed in someone? Well, who hasn't? Many times those closest to us will hurt us the most. Those we grow to depend on fail and it destroys us. Many times in our churches when someone has failed we don't give them the courtesy of a second chance. Is there someone today in your life that you need to not only give a second chance but forgive and do your part to restore them to service by walking arm and arm with them? Holding them accountable from this time forward but forgetting the past.

Paul did this for Mark. **2 Timothy 4:11** Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. Mark the one who wrote the gospel we study, a restored servant.