

031724

Approving the Beloved

Mark 1:1-15

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Background

We begin a 5-week team series, *Journey of the Beloved*, looking at key moments in the life of Jesus. We begin with his baptism and temptation. After the former he heard his Father's approval: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." After the temptation he was approved as faithful to God's word, and ready to begin his public ministry.

Sermon Text: Mk 1:1-15 (NIV)

1 The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God,
2 as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

"I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way" —

3 "a voice of one calling in the wilderness,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.' "

4 And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. 6 John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. 8 I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

9 At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit

descending on him like a dove. 11 And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." 12 At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, 13 and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

14 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- b. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- c. What is the best thing you heard on Sunday?

2. Sunday questions

- a. Of the six events we will cover over the next five weeks, which one is the most meaningful for you? Why?
- b. What calendar mostly gives shape to your year? Some options might be: sports, holidays, vacations, travel, work, church. Explain.
- c. If someone were to ask you about the Jesus story, what events would you include? Explain. The western church tends to focus on the cross, while the eastern church tends to focus on the resurrection. In which Jesus event do you tend to place your focus?
- d. At Jesus' baptism, He is declared the unique Son of God. At our baptisms, we are publicly declared adopted daughters/sons of God. If you have been baptized, what does this affirmation mean to you? If you have not been baptized, would you consider being baptized in April this year?
- e. In Jesus' temptation, He won the battle by relying on God's Word. Share any experiences you've had where God's Word proved to be powerful and effective.