

God's Servant Tempted

Mark 1:9-13, 21-28

The world is a very disunified, broken place. Every headline reminds us of this truth. From stories about Ukraine, to Gaza, to Mexico and Canada, to Greenland, to China and Russia, to Iraq and North Korea. The world is very divided. **Question: How do you think about the divisions of the kingdoms of this present world?**

If you are politically minded you may think of the division in terms of the superpower countries who are battling it out on the world stage for dominance.

If you are financially minded you may think of the division in terms of currency . . . some countries follow the US dollar and the BRICS countries are seeking to establish a currency that replaces that accepted standard.

If you are ideologically minded you might think of the division in terms of communism and capitalism.

If you are religiously minded you may think of the division in terms of Islam, Hinduism, Christianity, Atheism or some other creed. **How do you think about the divisions of the kingdoms of this present world?**

If you are a follower of Jesus, you think of the divisions in terms of God's rule and workings. You understand that there is a kingdom of light and a kingdom of darkness. There is a kingdom ruled by Jesus and a kingdom led by the devil. There are children of God and children of wrath.

Mark begins his book with the words:

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." (Mark 1:1 [ESV](#))

The word "gospel" means "an announcement of good news" And Mark makes clear that this good news announcement is **about Jesus the Messiah King who is the Son of God**. And what exactly is this announcement that Mark purposes to write about?

Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:14-15 [ESV](#))

The good news announcement is that though the kingdom of darkness has been allowed its day, now God is shaking the status quo. With the sending of His

Son, Jesus the Servant King, God is ushering in His kingdom into the present world.

God's kingdom is a kingdom where sinners are forgiven, where light dispels darkness, where Satan is vanquished, where peace and righteousness reign, where all that is broken is made whole.

The gospel is personal in that it offers each one of us an invitation into God's kingdom through faith in Jesus. God is making a path for each of us to be free from Satan's enslaving rule and to enter into Jesus' loving arms. The Gospel is very personal to every follower of Jesus.

Yet the gospel is also cosmic in that it declares the end of Satan's power over all the earth. John teaches us in his first letter that "the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." (1 John 5:19 [ESV](#)). At the coming of Jesus, God unleashes His King upon the world to defeat Satan and put an end to his cruel grasp upon the whole world. The Gospel reshapes the whole world from Jesus' advent to His triumphant return.

You might underline the word "beginning" in verse 1. **God is telling us that with Jesus' arrival there is a new start . . . a new age . . . a new dominion that Jesus is introducing to us.**

The word "beginning" also tells us that this new kingdom has now arrived in its early stage. That the beginning of the gospel is not the same as the culmination of the gospel. **When we think of the kingdom of God, we are right to think of it as ALREADY here because God's Servant King has come. And yet we are right also to think of it as NOT YET here because God's Servant King will come again to bring His kingdom to it full expression on a future day.**

"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil." (1 John 3:8 [ESV](#))

Main Idea: God sends His servant King into the world to upend the devil's kingdom and destroy his works. Jesus is offering every person entrance into the kingdom of God. And THAT is Good News!

In introducing the Servant King, Mark lets us see the King's coronation, then the King's first conflict with Satan and finally the King's conquest over Satan.

The Servant King's Coronation (1:9-11)

Remember Gabriel's words to the virgin Mary,

"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." (Luke 1:31-33 [ESV](#))

Though prophesied to be the King at His birth, Jesus is not coronated by God as King until he is 30 years old. This is fitting since the Lord gives Him the throne of David and David was anointed king at age 30. For Jesus first three decades, He lived on the earth in relative obscurity. And at the proper time, after the coming of John the Baptist, the Father willed to publicly anoint Him as King.

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (Mark 1:9-11 [ESV](#))

Three qualities about Jesus that we learn from His baptism.

Quality #1: Humility: This King identifies Himself with sinful people in His baptism. He is a serving King.

Quality #2: Power: This King is anointed by the Holy Spirit with power from heaven to execute His rule. He is an omnipotent King.

Quality #3: Authority: This King is commended by God as His beloved Son who pleases the Father in His goodness, His righteousness, His humility, His purity and His love. He is a rightful King.

Let us look at each of these separately for a moment:

Quality #1: This King identifies Himself with sinful people in His baptism. He is a serving King.

Keep in view what John's baptism is about:

"John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." (Mark 1:4 [ESV](#))

John's baptism is a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sin. Yet this King has done no wrong. He is completely perfect in righteousness in every way.

Why does this King go down into the repentance water and allow Himself to be baptized by John the Baptist? Jesus has no sin to repent from. He has no need for forgiveness. Yet He must identify with us completely in order to represent us in His atoning death. He must be made sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God through Him. As God's righteous Son, He does not fear the wrath of the Father falling upon Him. But His heart breaks over the wrath of the Father falling upon those whom He loves. **So He is baptized with the waters of repentance to stand with us in our sin.**

Jesus' baptism is Jesus' declaration, *"I am here to serve you as your Savior. I will take your sin upon myself and die in your place."* This King is unique in that He comes to serve the people and not fleece the people. He comes to pay the debt your sins have placed upon you and to bring forgiveness to you by dying as your substitute.

"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45 [ESV](#))

Few kings of the world possess any humility at all. But this King is filled to the max with humility and with love for His people.

Friends, how foolish to turn away from such a King. There is none like Him!!

Quality #2: Power: This King is anointed by the Holy Spirit with power from heaven to execute His rule. He is an omnipotent King.

And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. Mark 1:10

I do not know what happens when "heaven" is torn open, but what a wonder to have been there to see it! It is a cosmic event that those who experience will not forget. I am reminded of the same kind of event happening when Jesus comes a second time.

"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory." (Mark 13:24-26 [ESV](#))

The tearing open of the heavens points to the power of God being unleashed upon the earth. Then the Spirit of God descends upon Jesus like a dove descending from the sky.

The LORD is a triune God. He is One and yet exists in three distinct, co-equal, co-eternal divine Persons. During His earthly ministry, Jesus took on the clothes of frail humanity. He limited His use of His divine attributes and He relies upon the Spirit to give Him power to do the Father's will.

At Jesus' baptism, the Spirit makes it clear to Jesus and to us that He is with the Son empowering the Son to act as King over the kingdom of God. Just as the Spirit of God came upon God's servants in the Old Testament to do the will of God, so the **Spirit comes upon Jesus to guarantee strength to overcome Satan and His minions.** This King will not lack power to bring God's kingdom to us!

Quality #3: Authority: This King is commended by God as His beloved Son who pleases the Father in His goodness, His righteousness, His humility, His purity and His love. He is a rightful King.

And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (Mark 1:11 [ESV](#))

Jesus is the rightful heir to the throne. He is not an imposter . . . not a usurper. Jesus is the Father's Son and the Father publicly announces His pleasure in His Son at Jesus' baptism. The Father wants the world to know that Jesus is His choice as King. The Father wants us to know that He is pleased with His Son's obedience to His law. He is pleased with His Son's purpose in His mission. He is pleased with the way His Son cares for His own people. He is pleased with the justice His Son establishes. He is pleased with His Son's death on the cross. He is pleased with His Son's rule over all who are in His family.

Because the Father is well pleased with the Son, the Father will not allow His Son to fail as King. The Father will uphold Him. The Father will stand behind His authority. **When you look at Jesus, one thought that must roll through our minds is this simple truth: God the Father is well pleased with Him.**

In announcing His pleasure upon His Son, the Father is telling us that Jesus is the Messiah prophesied in the OT.

Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or

make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice.” (Isaiah 42:1-3 [ESV](#))

The Servant King’s Coronation (1:9-11)

The Servant King’s Conflict (1:12-13)

The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.” (Mark 1:12-13 [ESV](#))

Both Matthew and Luke give a more detailed account of Jesus’ temptation. But Mark adds to our understanding of this event in some important ways. Mark adds that the Spirit of God “drove” Jesus out into the wilderness. The word Mark uses is the same word Mark uses 11 other times to describe demons being “cast” or driven out of people. So it is a forceful word. This does not imply reluctance on the part of Jesus to go into the desert, but it does highlight that this conflict in the wilderness between Jesus and Satan is a divine appointment. In other words, God is bringing the fight to Satan and not the other way around.

Why would the Spirit drive Jesus into the wilderness where He would be tempted by the devil for 40 days? Answer: To prove Jesus’ invincibility in the face of Satan’s strongest opposition.

Up to this point, Satan has rolled every human he ever faced. He has an undefeated record against mankind. He thrashes every person he faces by corrupting them with sin. Satan is used to winning. But with the advent of the Servant King, Satan’s win streak comes to a jolting halt.

Question: To whom does the Spirit want to prove Jesus’ invincibility? To Satan and to us.

Truth: The 40-day temptation of Jesus proves to Satan that Jesus is the conquering King. God wants Satan to know the agony of defeat.

This conflict between proves to Satan that there is a new sheriff in town. This sheriff is not cowed, not coerced, not compelled, not corrupted by the evil one. Jesus cannot be seduced, enticed, nor persuaded by all the crafty temptations that Satan could throw at Him.

Jesus is a King who is worthy to sit upon God’s throne ruling over God’s kingdom. He is not intimidated by the devil and his minions. He stands firm

without wavering in the face of Satan's most vicious, most persistent, most seductive assault. Jesus is the ultimate overcomer and all resistance is futile.

Truth: The 40-day temptation of Jesus proves to us that Jesus is the conquering King. God wants us to know that we have a King who is not corrupted nor conquered by Satan.

For now, God allows Satan to have a kingdom. Satan labors with malice to keep his kingdom intact. **Satan works to keep the rule, authority, power and dominion that man's sin forfeited to him.**

"We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." (1 John 5:19 [ESV](#))

We all are at one time were held captive in Satan's kingdom,

"following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind." (Ephesians 2:2-3 [ESV](#))

If we are to be free, another must liberate us. We cannot liberate ourselves. Jesus is the King that God sends to destroy Satan and his kingdom.

"Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out." (John 12:31 [ESV](#))

"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil." (1 John 3:8 [ESV](#))

"The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." (Romans 16:20 [ESV](#))

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (Colossians 1:13-14 [ESV](#))

Matt Papa put this glorious truth to song:

*Christ, the true and better Adam
Son of God and Son of man*

*Who, when tempted in the garden
 Never yielded, never sinned
 He, who makes the many righteous
 Brings us back to life again
 Dying, He reversed the curse, then
 Rising, crushed the serpent's head
 --Matt Papa*

At the temptation, Jesus is reclaiming for us what Adam forfeited. Adam's sin took the kingdom of peace and righteousness away from us. Jesus' obedience brought this kingdom back to us. Adam's sin left us in darkness and death. Jesus' obedience gifts us with light and life.

We need to know that we have a King who stands in the face of the devil and wins. Our hope of winning rests upon our King. We cannot win against the devil without Him, but with Him our victory has been secured.

Does Satan tempt you to sin against the LORD? Yes! Do his temptations seem overpowering? Yes. Left to ourselves we will fail every single time. But in Jesus, we can be overcomers too! We do not have to live defeated by the Tempter. We can live in victory over sin through Him who strengthens us. Our strength is insufficient, but His strength is enough!!

*1 A mighty fortress is our God,
 a bulwark never failing;
 our helper he, amid the flood
 of mortal ills prevailing.
 For still our ancient foe
 does seek to work us woe;
 his craft and power are great,
 and armed with cruel hate,
 on earth is not his equal.*

*2 Did we in our own strength confide,
 our striving would be losing,
 were not the right Man on our side,
 the Man of God's own choosing.*

*You ask who that may be?
 Christ Jesus, it is he;
 Lord Sabaoth his name,
 from age to age the same;
 and he must win the battle.*

*3 And though this world, with devils filled,
 should threaten to undo us,
 we will not fear, for God has willed
 his truth to triumph through us.
 The prince of darkness grim,
 we tremble not for him;
 his rage we can endure,
 for lo! his doom is sure;
 one little word shall fell him.
 --Martin Luther*

The Servant King's Coronation (1:9-11)

The Servant King's Conflict (1:12-13)

The Servant King's Conquest (1:21-28)

23 And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, 24 "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God." 25 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" 26 And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him." (Mark 1:23-26 [ESV](#))

Whenever demons are confronted by Jesus, the demons cry out with a loud voice. Why do they do that? They know that He is the Conquering King and that He has the power to place them in the pit. They do not know the day of their judgment and His presence before them cause them to think that today is the day. They are caught off guard by their presence before Him. **They are panicked with fear in the presence of the Servant King. They know that He will judge them and His presence rattles them with all-consuming dread.**

Truth: All demons shriek with panic in the presence of Jesus because they know His victory is certain and His judgment is inescapable.

Friends, we humans too will shriek in terror at the presence of the LORD when we stand before Him in day of judgment . . . UNLESS we have bowed our knee in submission to Him as our King and received the benefit of His mercy through His blood. We must not be caught off guard on that day.

When a king is coronated or a President is inaugurated, the people who are governed by the leaders ask the question, “What is this leader going to do? What is his vision for his government?”

In our recent presidential election, the two candidates had such contrasting visions related to immigration, social spending, transgender and racial issues, international conflicts, and the military. These conflicting visions was the reason people voted for the candidate that they did. We all knew that one candidate would govern very differently from another.

What is the vision of this King? What is his agenda?

1. Preach the Gospel.
2. Destroy Satan and His kingdom.
3. Rescue those held captive by Satan.

This story in verses 21-28 remind us of this King’s vision. He is in the synagogue proclaiming the Gospel when a man with a demon creates a scene. The demon inside of this man shrieks, “*What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.*”

A number of important truths immediately emerge from this encounter:

1. Demons are real.
2. Demons come to church.
3. Demons oppress people who are in church.
4. Demons know who Jesus is. They have good theology, but no salvation.
5. Demons know that Jesus has the power and authority to destroy them.
6. Demons shriek in panic in the presence of Jesus.
7. Jesus is not afraid of demons.

In one of this weeks, Together Day by Day, Daniel Scheaffer writes, “***you can have the right identity and knowledge of who Jesus is, but have no desire to follow him or submit to him as Lord. One day every knee will bow and tongue confess***

that Jesus is Lord. One day we will see the authority Christ possesses as heaven and earth are united. May God search our own hearts today, that we would do as 1 Peter 3:15 says “but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy”

J.C. Ryle further notes, “The mere belief of the facts and doctrines of Christianity will never save our souls. Such belief is no better than the belief of devils. They all believe and know that Jesus is the Christ. They believe that He will one day judge the world, and cast them down to endless torment in hell. . . . “They believe and tremble.” (James ii. 19.). . . “The life of Christianity,” says Luther, “consists in possessive pronouns.” It is one thing to say “Christ is a Saviour.” It is quite another to say He is my Saviour and my Lord.” The devil can say the first. The true Christian alone can say the second.”

Question: Do you believe in your heart that Jesus is LORD?

But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.”” (Mark 1:25-27 [ESV](#))

We have a King who has come to free us from Satan’s enslavement, control, condemnation and hold upon our lives. Our King is successful on every occasion in routing our natural enemy. He is willing to support us in our fight against the evil one. He brings victory to us when we submit ourselves to Him.

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. (Hebrews 2:14-15 [ESV](#))

Satan’s doom is sealed. In the present age, Satan is still allowed by God to exist and to work his schemes in this world. Satan labors to murder, destroy and devour people. If you are outside of Jesus, you are in the power of the evil one. **If you are united with Jesus through faith, you have a king who protects you from Satan’s destruction and who will strengthen you as he attacks you.**

Remember Peter is Mark’s source for this book that we are studying. It is a book that will highlight Jesus’ conquest over Satan. When Peter is relating the Good News of Jesus to Mark, he is painfully aware of Satan’s power and purposes.

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. (Luke 22:31-32 [ESV](#))

Now Jesus protection of us is a motivation for our action, not a cause to be lazy in the battle against him.

And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? 3 Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. And he came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." (Mark 14:37-41 [ESV](#))

Peter is not ready for Satan's assault and temptation and will deny Jesus three times on this very night.

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith," (1 Peter 5:8-9 [ESV](#))

Let me get really practical . . . Satan's temptations come in many forms with many faces. I want you to know that Satan is seeking to destroy you if you are experiencing or being tempted with . . .

sexual impurity, anger, conflict in family, discouragement in marriage, rebellion against parents, discontentment, a desire for more money and things, worry and anxiety, laziness in work, slothfulness in life, drunkenness and drugs, fear, resentment, an apathy about sin, bitterness, unbiblical ideas about God, a refusal to forgive one who wronged you, gossip, slander, harsh words, boasting, accusations against others, doubts about God and His love, course jesting, fornication, stealing, cheating, adultery, lying, shame, despair, apathy in worship, neglect of service to God and discouragement.

Are you experiencing any of these things? Your adversary is working to devour you! We need a King who is more powerful than the king who deceives this present world.

*Did we in our own strength confide,
our striving would be losing,
were not the right Man on our side,*

*the Man of God's own choosing.
 You ask who that may be?
 Christ Jesus, it is he;
 Lord Sabaoth his name,
 from age to age the same;
 and he must win the battle*

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. (Hebrews 2:14-15 [ESV](#))

Conclusion: To which kingdom do you belong?

“And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.” (Revelation 12:9 [ESV](#))

“And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” (Revelation 20:9-10)

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