

## **MEET THE MESSIAH**

Tuesday, July 11

Reading: Mark 1:2-13

**Mark 1:7** *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."*

Mark begins by reminding us that the message of the gospel is grounded in the Old Testament Scriptures. The prophets Malachi (3:1) and Isaiah (40:3) both predicted a forerunner who would prepare the way for Messiah. John the Baptist fulfilled this role. His very description brings to mind the prophet Elijah (cf. 2 Kings 1:8; see also Malachi 4:5; Luke 1:17).

John's message was one of repentance. He called for people to turn from their sins to God because the Messiah was coming. Baptism was an outward sign of their change of heart. And his ministry was a big success as people came to him from all over Judea and Jerusalem. But even though some were wondering if John himself was the Messiah (see Luke 3:15-17), the Baptist continually pointed to the One coming after him who was so much greater that John did not feel worthy to perform the task of the lowliest of slaves for Him.

While John identified Jesus as the Savior, God the Father Himself would give witness to the Person of Christ as well. He spoke from heaven at Jesus' baptism and declared that Jesus was His beloved Son. This was followed by Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. From the other gospels we read that Satan began each temptation by saying, "If you are the Son of God..." Jesus defeated every satanic attack by quoting the Word of God. In a roundabout way, even Satan was identifying Jesus as God.

### **POINTS TO PONDER:**

1. "I Am Not Worthy." Great success could easily have gone to John's head and made him think more highly of himself. But John not only knew who he was, he knew who he was not! He pointed everyone away from himself and toward the Messiah. This humility is the mark of a true servant. Do you see yourself as the most important person or as a humble servant? How does a servant's heart show in a Christian's life?
2. "The Spirit Descending Like a Dove." At Jesus' baptism we see all three members of the Trinity present. But it also helps us understand how Jesus conducted His ministry here on earth. Jesus is the eternal Son of God. He did not "become" God at His baptism as some claim. He is, was, and always will be God. While He did not give up His deity when He came to earth, the Lord Jesus did voluntarily give up the independent use of His divine power. He lived and ministered under the authority of the Father through the power of the Spirit (see John 5:19-30; 8:29; 12:49-50). Today, believers minister in the power of the Spirit as well. Are you allowing the Holy Spirit to lead and direct you?
3. "The Spirit Sent Him Out Into the Wilderness." After spiritual highs often come spiritual trials. Satan's temptations came after the great experience of His baptism. Like Jesus, the Spirit is there with us to give us the power to defeat the temptation and have victory through the power of God's Word in our lives.