



Pointers and questions on the Gospel of

MARK

Session 1

1:1 - 2:28

Summary

- 1:1-13** Introduction to the Gospel. The ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus' baptism and temptations.
- 1:14 - 2:12** Jesus calls his first disciples and embarks on his public ministry, with many healings.
- 2:13-28** The calling of Levi (Matthew) leads to debates about fasting and Jesus' relationship to the Jewish sabbath.

Questions to get you thinking

1. Why did John the Baptist dress like he did (1:6)? See 2 Kings 1:1-8. John clearly modelled himself on this OT individual. Are you modelling yourself just as deliberately on Jesus, in terms of your character?
2. Can you see the Trinity in 1:9-11?
3. After a 'high', a 'low'. How does this pattern appear in Jesus' experience in 1:9-13? Is it a pattern we can expect in our own lives?
4. How would you summarise, from 1:14-15, the message that Jesus preached? How much of it is relevant to our preaching of the gospel message today?
5. What word occurs twice in 1:21-28 to describe the quality of Jesus' teaching? What do you think gave his teaching this quality?
6. The synagogue (1:21) was the Jewish place of worship. Comment on the fact that a demon-possessed man was in this of all places.
7. Look at 1:25 and 1:34. One would have expected Jesus to welcome any recognition of who he was. Why, then, did he seem to do the opposite?
8. What does 1:35-39 tell you about priorities in a busy life? And what does it tell you about responding to people's demands on your time and energy? In view of what the disciples told Jesus in 1:37, how do you explain his actions in v38-39?
9. In 1:40 the leper said to Jesus, '*If you are willing, you can make me clean.*' Some Christians say that, when seeking God for healing, we should never say, 'If it be your will, Lord' because that shows a lack of faith. With 1:40 in mind, what are your thoughts on this?
10. Does 1:40-45 shed any more light on the reasons why Jesus asked people not to give him publicity? (See Question 7 above)
11. Note the phrase 'their faith' in 2:5. *Whose* faith was it? Think carefully about this.
12. What does 2:1-12 tell us about the connection between healing and the forgiveness of sins?
13. Don't you think that the 'teachers of the law' (Jewish religious leaders) had a valid point in both 2:6-7 and 2:15-16? How would you have answered them if you had been present?
14. What does 2:18-22 tell us about changing attitudes in the light of changing circumstances?
15. Is Jesus saying in 2:23-28 that it's sometimes OK to break God's rules?

