

Mark 1:2-11 NASB

“Why Jesus was baptized”

“As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:
‘BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD
OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR
WAY;³THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE
WILDERNESS, MAKE READY THE WAY OF
THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.’

“⁴John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness
preaching a baptism of repentance for the
forgiveness of sins. ⁵And all the country of Judea
was going out to him, and all the people of
Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in
the Jordan River, confessing their sins. ⁶John was
clothed with camel’s hair and *wore* a leather belt
around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild
honey. ⁷And he was preaching, and saying, ‘After me
One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not
fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His
sandals. ⁸ I baptized you with water; but He will
baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’

“⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in
Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.
Jordan. ¹⁰Immediately coming up out of the water,
He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a
dove descending upon Him; ¹¹and a voice came out
of the heavens: ‘You are My beloved Son, in You I
am well-pleased.’”

You may be thinking:

- **My in-laws constantly irritate me;**
- **My Aunt Maizie suffers from Alzheimer’s;**
- **The world is in a mess;**
 - **And, Bob, you want to preach on a subject like Jesus’ baptism?”**



**What you experienced last week,
Your frustrations today,
and what you might face this week
all relate to the reason for Jesus’ baptism.**

**We noted before the word *gospel* in Mark’s
opening verse.¹**

In Mark’s time, the Greek term translated “gospel”
didn’t mean what comes to mind when we hear it.

**We tend to use “gospel” in one of three ways.
First, we speak of the New Testament’s “Four
Gospels,” the books written about Jesus’ life.**

**Second, we apply *gospel* to fiery, stern sermons
some ministers preach.**

Third, some people use the term *gospel* as a
synonym for truth: “This is gospel.”

**The word translated as “gospel” didn’t even
begin as a religious word.**

¹ Mark 1:1 NIV “The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ. . .”

**Moms, dads, and kids used the term *gospel*.
So did farmers, business people, and guys
gabbing at watering holes.**

Imagine tomorrow morning finding that
your bank account is triple what you thought.

**Your Aunt Maizie recovers from
Alzheimer’s disease; your brother-in-law
finds a job; he, your sister, and their ornery
14 kids moved out of your house overnight.**

**The Greeks used the word translated
“gospel” for telling that type of good news.**

It wasn’t just pleasant news, but great news.

**A couple of my high school buddies and I invested
in four gallons of freshly squeezed apple juice.**

**We put the four precious jugs in a bicycle shed
under the willow tree in my folks’ back yard.**

We looked forward to seeing that juice ferment.

**My younger brother Gary found the juice and
ran into the house to tell my mother.**

- I don’t know why Gary and my mother concluded that the cider was mine.
- Only circumstantial existed.
- Our neighbor Mr. Blackerby could have hidden the cider there.
- Because Gary got his annoying elder brother in trouble, he likely deemed the news good.



**The word translated *gospel* mostly described
running excitedly to tell really good news.**

**One Friday, Jesus’ followers felt depressed
because they saw him beaten, bloodied,
crucified, certified dead, and placed in a tomb.**

**Early Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene and a
group of women walked forlornly to the tomb.**

Seeing the huge stone in front of Jesus’ sepulcher
rolled away troubled the women further.

**Two men in shining clothes told the women that
Jesus had been raised from death.**

The women entered the tomb to see for themselves.

They came back out and stood puzzled.

**Then, Mary Magdalene not only saw Jesus,
she touched him, and talked with him.**

**At the cemetery, the women examined the
empty grave, talked to angels, saw and
talked with their friend, now alive, who’d
been savagely treated and died on Friday.**

Think of their joy.

These facts give us a feel for the gospel’s meaning.

John’s Gospel tells us: “**Mary Magdalene went to
the disciples with the news: ‘I have seen the Lord!’**”²

**Mary didn’t saunter; she didn’t stroll; she didn’t
fix her hair or do a little shopping on the way.**

² John 20:18 NIV

“The women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.”³

When Mark began his letter stating:

“The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God,” here’s what he meant:

The creator of the Universe visited our planet to let us know, Death is dead!

Jesus defeated the fearsome enemy that takes our loved ones and threatens us almost daily.

The facts about Jesus are so special, so awesome, people should run everywhere telling the news.

2. Here’s Mark second important verse: “And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.”⁴

- **As we noted, John was Jesus’ advance man.**
- **John shared other great news about the Son of God, who visited our planet:**

There’s a cure for guilt we all feel.

Some years back a new product called "Disposable Guilt Bags" appeared. You could buy a set of ten ordinary brown bags on which were printed the following instructions; "Place the bag securely over

your mouth, take a deep breath and blow all your guilt out, then dispose of the bag immediately."

The Associated Press reported that 2500 kits had been quickly sold at \$2.50 per kit.

I wonder if those entrepreneurs who sold ordinary paper sacks at \$2.50 for 10—probably \$15-\$20 at today’s prices—suffered any pangs of guilt.⁵

The success of their venture proves how much our guilt affects us.

No human remedy effectively treats guilt.

Folks try to fix guilt with antacids, uppers, downers, vacations, expensive gifts, movies, psychiatry, computer games, and denial.

Only one treatment for guilt works.

Jesus’ advance man John told the news:

“We cure guilt by repenting. We stop doing wrong. Pay unpaid debts, confess sin, and be baptized into Christ for forgiveness of it.”



Jesus’ death on the cross covers all of your guilt. Jesus paid it—all of it.

John Kord Lagermann tells us of Tom Anderson, whose existence was blighted by the memory of his part in a fraternity escapade that resulted in the death of a school chum. He went aimlessly from one job to another. After six

³ Matthew 28:8 NIV

⁴ Mark 1:4 NIV

⁵ See WordPress.com or realtruthmatters.com

years of marriage, he and his wife parted. Rather suddenly the news about Tom changed. His wife returned. He had a great job. One day he related his story.

"I used to think, 'Nothing can undo what I have done.' The thought of my guilt would stop me in the middle of a smile or a handshake. It put a wall between Betty and me. Then I had an unexpected visit from the person I dreaded most to see--the mother of the college classmate who died.

"'Years ago,' she said, 'I found it in my heart through prayer to forgive you. Betty forgave you. So did your friends and employers.' She paused, and then said sternly, 'You are the one person who hasn't forgiven Tom Anderson. Who do you think you are to stand out against the people of this town and the Lord Almighty?'

"I looked into her eyes and found there a . . . permission to be the person I might have been if her boy had lived. For the first time in my adult life, I felt worthy to love and be loved."⁶

This exciting news is, “The Son of God came and lived here among us.”

He brought forgiveness—the kind Tom

⁶ St. Clair, Robert James. *The Adventure of Being You*. New Jersey, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1966. p.93

Anderson experienced—and what we all need. Jesus also brought victory over death.

Jesus’ resurrection proved his power.

What does that have to do with Jesus’ baptism?

Jesus came here not only to pay for our guilt and to give us eternal life.

Jesus lived as a perfect life-example.

Every day I talk with people who struggle with decisions.

One thing that stymies them is all the advice friends and loved ones give them.

Want superior life-advice?



- Be suspicious of politicians.
 - Forget the TV, talk radio, and social media talking heads.
- Be wary of college professors.
- Be cautious about preachers.

What am I recommending?

Follow Jesus.

Hebrews 6:20 calls Jesus our “forerunner.”

In his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Terms*, W.E. Vine traced the term *PRODRAMOS* to a military scout, who was sent to make observations about the enemy or an advance person sent by a king to make preparations for his arrival.

Hebrews uses **PRODROMOS** to describe Christ Jesus who went before us to scout the way and safely leads us.

Not one professor or professional has seen or experienced it all as Jesus has.

They are all adrift in uncharted waters.

Recall what our text says:

“Immediately coming up out of the water, He (Jesus) saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; and a voice came out of the heavens: ‘You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.’”

It makes sense to follow someone who perfectly pleased God.

Why was God pleased?

As an adult—at 30 years old—Jesus made the conscious decision to complete everything God sent him to do. Jordan



Remember, John didn’t want to baptize Jesus.

“It should be the other way around,” John protested. “I should be baptized by you.”

Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness."⁷

Baptism is for the forgiveness of sin.

Jesus never sinned.

Why was he baptized?

He never did wrong--never committed a sin.

What was the point of his baptism?

Jesus was baptized “to fulfill all righteousness”—to give us a perfect example of doing God’s will. This was something his parents couldn’t do for him.

If so, as an example for us, Joseph and Mary would have baptized Jesus when he was a baby.

Baptism (being born again) is a decision adults must make for themselves.

Baptism unites us with Christ (See Romans 6).

Do you want to benefit from Jesus’ good news?

- **Accept Jesus’ payment for your guilt.**
- **Be buried with him in baptism for the remission of your sins.**

As God word says: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38 NRSV).

Live by faith in Christ and you’ll share in his resurrection and be with him forever in heaven.

Nothing compares to Jesus’ Good News.

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⁷ Matthew 3:15 NIV