

Mark 1

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The following 2 questions are taken from *Mark: Free to Follow Jesus*. David Hewitt. Grand Rapids: Baker House, 1995.

1. How do the events surrounding Jesus' baptism prepare him for the temptations that follow? What do you think is the significance of the presence of the animals and the angels? Are there any parallels for us today?
2. Jesus clearly demonstrates his authority in the healing and exorcisms of 1:21-34. Compare Jesus' use of authority with that of other authorities of our time. What can we learn about Jesus about the proper exercise of authority?
 - a. My additions: What different kinds of authority does Jesus exhibit in this chapter? How and why does he refuse to comply with people's expectations?
3. While it was common in Jesus' day for rabbis to have a group of disciples, Jesus broke tradition by calling disciples rather than waiting for them to choose him. How does his method of calling disciples compare with our doctrine about God's role in calling us to salvation?
4. For Jews, John the Baptist's practice of baptism was a bizarre ritual; only Gentiles who were trying to become Jews would have been baptized in such a manner. Mark's gospel reports that John's baptism was one of repentance. Why would Jesus be baptized if he had never sinned? What does baptism symbolize and represent for us?
5. Why does Jesus repeatedly tell people *not* to spread the word about his miracles? When people, like the leper in chap. 1, did proclaim that Jesus had healed them, what effects did their proclamations have on Jesus' ministry?
6. What associations did Jesus' contemporaries have with the phrase "the Kingdom of God"? How does Jesus alter the meaning of the phrase, and how do we understand it now?
7. Mark is an action-packed gospel, including a documentary-style look at a day in Jesus' ministry (1:21-34). In fact, the word "immediately" occurs over 40 times in this gospel. What is Mark trying to accomplish with his fast-paced narrative?