



# Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



## Episode 106 - Clearing Ground (Mark 1)

As we mentioned in previous episodes, the Jewish people were anticipating a mighty, conquering king when they thought of the promised Messiah. John the Baptist begins proclaiming, "... The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" His job is to prepare the Jews to receive their King properly.

- Rather than the true relationship God wanted, the heart of Judaism had become "Keep the rules and keep your nose clean." Why was this preventing the Jews from being prepared to receive Jesus?
- What different outlooks on life make it difficult for people to embrace Jesus as the King of their lives?
- Worship had become an empty, thoughtless ritual. What words of John would stir the people to reconsider?
- What can you do to prepare yourself to worship with more thought and meaning?

At Jesus' Baptism the Holy Spirit came down upon Him physically and remained on Him. In our baptism we receive that same Holy Spirit to dwell within us and always remain with us.

- How does the realization that the Holy Spirit remains in you transform the various good and bad situations you face throughout your life?

At the same time the voice of the Father spoke, "You are My beloved Son; with You I am well pleased." Through faith in Christ, the Father has forgiven our sins for Jesus' sake and adopted us as children of God.

- What difference should it make in our life to recall that God has adopted us in baptism as His own children?

Now that Jesus has been anointed as Israel's King, what would you expect Him to do first? You might think it would be anything other than that which the Holy Spirit guides Him to do: go into the wilderness to suffer, fast and be severely tempted by Satan for 40 days.

- Why would God see this as a fit thing for His Son to do as Israel's King?
- What good things have you seen God accomplish when He has permitted you to go through times of suffering and temptation?
- How can remembering Jesus' temptation encourage us in times of prolonged suffering or waiting?

Jesus' most important work was to make us right with God by suffering God's wrath for our sins. To do that He had to be faultless and resist every temptation. Now that Jesus successfully withstood Satan's attacks, He begins His ministry and selects the first of His disciples—two sets of brothers who are fisherman.

- Why would Jesus choose His first disciples so early in His ministry?
- In what way are all Christians "disciples" who follow, live with and learn from their Lord?