

Summary

This sermon begins a series through the Gospel of Mark by examining Mark 1:1-8 and asking the fundamental question: 'Who do you say Jesus is?' Pastor Mike Sigmund explains that Mark's Gospel, though second in the New Testament, was actually written first and records the eyewitness account of the Apostle Peter. The sermon establishes that Mark answers this crucial question by declaring Jesus to be 'Jesus Christ, the Son of God' - fully human yet without sin, the promised Messiah who fulfills Old Testament prophecies. The message also introduces John the Baptist as Jesus' forerunner, whose mission was to prepare hearts through preaching repentance and baptism. John's humble recognition of Jesus' holiness and power demonstrates the proper response to Christ's identity. The sermon concludes with a call for both salvation for those who don't know Jesus and deeper discipleship for believers, launching a comprehensive study through Mark's Gospel.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather together in Your presence today, we thank You for bringing us here to study Your Word. We ask that You would open our hearts and minds to receive what You want to teach us through this time together. Help us to set aside any distractions or preconceived notions, and make us receptive to Your Spirit's leading. Lord, we pray that You would use this discussion to draw us closer to Jesus and to one another. May we be honest in our sharing and gracious in our listening. We surrender this time to You and ask for Your blessing upon our group. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be and what would you want to ask them?

Key Verses

- Mark 1:1-8
- Isaiah 40:3
- Romans 8:15-16

Questions

- How does Mark's direct declaration that Jesus is 'the Son of God' in verse 1 set the tone for the entire Gospel? What does this tell us about Mark's purpose in writing?
- John the Baptist lived an unconventional lifestyle - wearing camel hair, eating locusts, and living in the desert. Why do you think God chose someone so 'strange' to prepare the way for Jesus? What does this teach us about how God uses people?
- John said he wasn't worthy to untie Jesus' sandals, yet crowds flocked to hear him preach. How do you balance recognizing your own unworthiness before Christ while still being confident in sharing the Gospel with others?
- The sermon mentions that John could preach and baptize with water, but only Jesus could baptize with the Holy Spirit and truly change lives. How does this distinction impact the way we approach evangelism and discipleship?
- Mark emphasizes that Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies. Why is it important that Jesus has historical and prophetic roots rather than appearing out of nowhere?
- The pastor shared survey responses from college students about who Jesus is, ranging from 'someone important to a lot of people' to 'God's son, our Savior.' What influences in our culture make it difficult for people to see Jesus clearly?
- John's message was described as 'hard' because he preached about sin and repentance, yet people came from all over to hear him. What does this suggest about people's hunger for truth, even when it's challenging?
- The sermon asks the central question: 'Who do you say Jesus is?' How has your understanding and relationship with Jesus deepened or changed over time? What has influenced those changes?

Life Application

This week, take time each day to read through the Gospel of Mark using the 30-day reading plan mentioned in the sermon. As you read, write down at least one thing you learn about who Jesus is each day. At the end of the week, review your notes and share with someone what new insights you've gained about Christ's identity and character.

Key Takeaways

- Mark declares Jesus to be 'Jesus Christ, the Son of God' - fully human yet without sin, the promised Messiah who came to save people from their sins
- Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies, demonstrating that God has always planned to provide salvation for humanity
- John the Baptist served as Jesus' forerunner, preparing hearts through preaching repentance and baptism, while recognizing his own unworthiness before Christ
- Only Jesus has the power to truly change lives through baptism with the Holy Spirit, while human messengers can only point people to Him
- The central question every person must answer is 'Who do you say Jesus is?' - this determines our eternal destiny and daily relationship with God

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank You for this time of discussion and for the truths we've explored together about who You are. We acknowledge that You are indeed Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the promised Lord of all. Help us to live in light of this reality throughout the coming week. For those in our group who may still be wrestling with questions about Your identity, we pray that Your Holy Spirit would continue to work in their hearts. For those who know You as Savior, help us to grow deeper in our understanding and more faithful in our obedience. May we be like John the Baptist - humble messengers who point others to You, recognizing that only You have the power to transform lives. Thank You for Your love, Your sacrifice, and Your ongoing work in our lives. In Your holy name we pray, Amen.