



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

Week 2: The Divine Dance

Last week we saw how Jesus was unlike us because he was the Son of God and the awaited messiah/Christ. This week we see the other side of Jesus, his humanity. By being God, he is able to save us but by being fully human, he is able to empathize with us.

1. Jesus Obeys

- Read Mark 1:9, Matthew 3:15

Jesus was baptised by John as a sign of his obedience to God. In doing so, he showed that he was willing to submit to death in order to atone for the sins of humanity, but that he would also be raised to life again. He obeyed God all the way through his life in keeping the law perfectly, and by resisting temptation and enduring suffering willingly. Many of us don't obey God on matters that the Scriptures are clear about. We need to change and start obeying God. All the small steps of obedience we take slowly develop into a way of life.

- ❖ Q: What are some of the clear instructions in the scriptures that we see Christians blatantly ignoring? (Keep this general).
- ❖ Q: Are there areas of your life (not just in areas of morality) where you are not obeying God, regardless of what the Scriptures say?

2. Jesus Dwells in Loving Community

- Read Mark 1:10-11, Genesis 1:2, John 1:1

In the four gospel accounts of Jesus' baptism, all 3 members of the Trinity were present. This echoes Genesis 1 where God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit were present in creation (which John 1:1 supports). The baptism of Jesus was the beginning of the new creation; the restoration of all things that were broken in Genesis 3. Though the idea of the trinity is complex there are things that are clear in scripture:

- I. The Trinity is an eternal relationship of loving self-sacrifice and "other-centeredness".
- II. God creates man in the image and likeness of Himself and part of that image is "other-centered" community.
- III. The secret to joy, freedom and purpose is found in an "other-centered" approach to people and to God.

Our sinful nature prevents us from experiencing this because we are naturally wired to be self-focused and self-serving. Very often even our service to others is motivated by selfish ambition.

- ❖ Q: What do you think it would look like in marriage if both husband and wife served one another in ways that were totally "other-centered"?
- ❖ Q: In your own friendship groups or family structures do you serve out of duty, to get something in return, to be esteemed or out of genuine love and concern for their well-being regardless of being recognized or not?
- ❖ Q: Are we serving our church community in some way? If we are, what is our motive? (Would we be happy to clean up every week without thanks or special notice, or serve in areas that no one else wants to serve just because there is great need?)
- ❖ Q: If we find ourselves convicted of complete selfish ambition, how should we respond to God about all of these things? Are there any action-steps that you could take towards others as you demonstrate repentance and faith?

3. Jesus Suffers and is Tempted to Rebel in that Suffering

- Read Mark 1:12-13

God sent Jesus into the desert to experience immense trial and temptation at the hand of his enemy, Satan. He was genuinely tempted to put his needs above God's, but he was able to resist and modeled obedience to God that no other human being had ever done perfectly before. He was able to do this because he had been empowered by the Holy Spirit and he believed the words of affirmation that God had spoken over him. This is the same way that we are to overcome temptation.

- ❖ Q: Have you ever looked back at a trial and temptation as something that God had planned for your good, even though at the time it was terrible for you?
- ❖ Q: How does the Holy Spirit's power help us when overcoming temptation? Do you have an example of when you experienced this power?