

# Your Substitute Teacher



David B. Capes  
Academic Dean/  
Professor of NT

Houston Graduate  
School of Theology

# According to Mark

THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL OF  
JESUS THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD

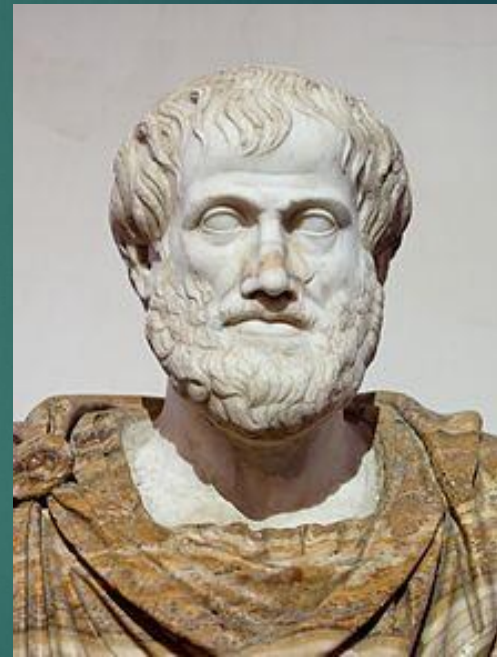
MARK 1:1

# Aristotle's *Poetics*

*A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be. An end, on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but has nothing following it.*

# Aristotle's *Poetics*

*A middle is that which follows something as some other thing follows it. A well constructed plot, therefore, must neither begin nor end at haphazard, but conform to these principles.*



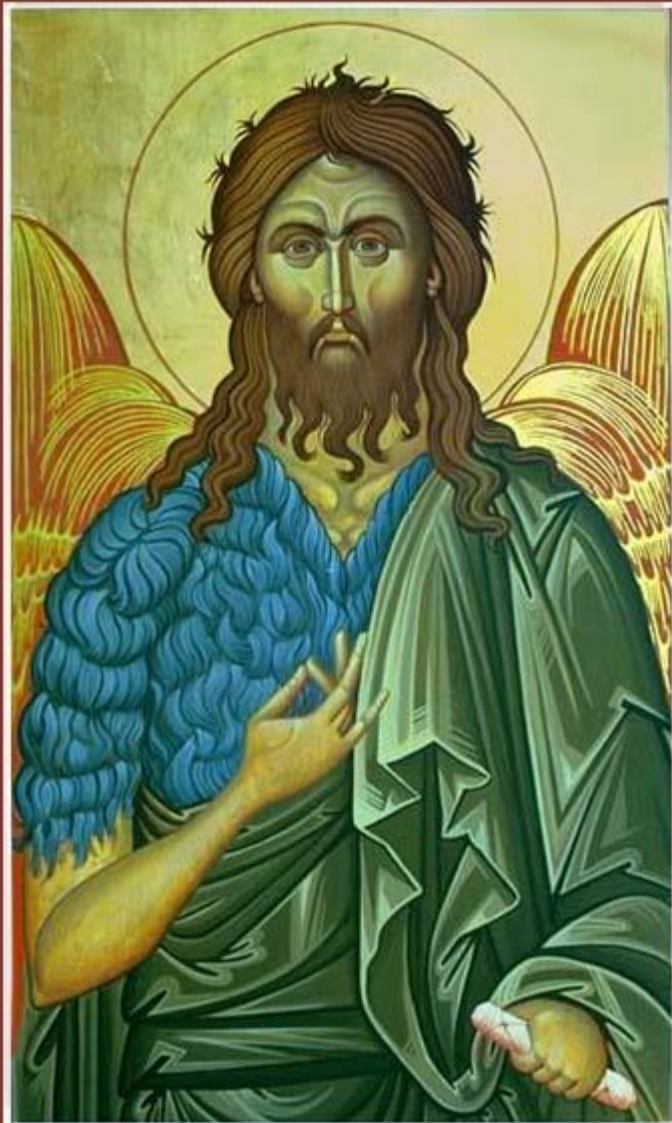
*Mark  
the  
Evangelist*

*Jesus the  
Messiah,  
the Son of  
God*





# John the Baptizer



# Mark 1:2-3

<sup>2</sup> As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger  
ahead of you,

who will prepare your way;

<sup>3</sup> the voice of one crying out in the  
wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight,’”

# John the Baptist

Mark gives us a blended quotation of Scripture, linked together by the phrase “prepare the way.”





# Isaiah 40—the turning point in the book of Isaiah

John is

- ▶ “my messenger”
- ▶ “prepares the way”
- ▶ “the voice of one crying in the wilderness”

Prepare the way of  
“THE LORD.”

Jesus = Kyrios = YHWH

The beginning of  
Christology is the return  
of YHWH to Zion.

N. T. Wright

# John the baptizer

- ▶ John comes to "prepare the way of the Lord" (Exod 23:20; Mal 3:1; Isa 40:3)
- ▶ He appears in the wilderness of Judea near the Dead Sea
- ▶ He baptizes (immerses) people in the Jordan to prepare them for the Kingdom

# John's baptism



# *“baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins”*

- ▶ Repentance translates *metanoia*
- ▶ It means a change of mind leading to a change of behavior
- ▶ Confession accompanies their repentance
- ▶ Baptism or immersion appears to come from Jewish rites of purification which often included washing in water

# John as a prophet

Prophets speak for  
God

Prophets also act  
out their message

- ▶ *He lives in the wilderness (new Exodus)*
- ▶ *He dresses in camel's hair, the garment of the prophet (Elijah/ 2 Kings 1:8)*
- ▶ *He eats locusts and wild honey*



# Why locusts and wild honey?

Why are we told about what John was eating (diet?)?

John's acts are the acts of a prophet. He is acting out God's message.



# Why locusts and wild honey?



LOCUSTS symbolize God's judgment.

God consumes the consumer.

The END of judgment has come. (Joel 1:1-4; cf. 2:25-29)

# Israel's enemies would invade like locusts





# Why locusts and honey?

HONEY symbolizes that this will once again be "a land flowing with milk and honey".




# Someone greater is coming

John says he is not worthy to stoop down and loose his sandals.

John baptizes in water.

The "coming one" will baptize in the Holy Spirit.





Jesus came from  
Nazareth to be  
baptized by John

WHY IS JESUS BAPTIZED? IS HE A  
SINNER WHO NEEDS  
FORGIVENESS?

# Why Jesus was baptized.

## Four possibilities

- ▶ To identify with John
- ▶ To identify with sinners
- ▶ To mark a turning point

Repentance means change. Jesus' baptism marks a turning point in his life.

- ▶ To foreshadow his death, burial and resurrection

# Jesus' Vision and Audition

What he saw?

*The heavens  
opened*

*The Spirit  
descending as  
a dove*

What he heard?

*A voice from  
heaven*

*"You are my  
Beloved Son, . .*

*.*

*In you I am well  
pleased."*

# The heavenly Voice

*According to Jewish tradition, one could not hear God's voice and live. But a person could hear the BAT QOL (literally, ""daughter of the voice"), what we might call its echo.*

*The words of the voice come from Scripture.*

*"You are my beloved Son," (Psalms 2:7)*

*""in you I am well pleased" (Isaiah 42:1)*

# THE SPIRIT DROVE JESUS INTO THE DESERT

FOR 40 DAYS AND NIGHTS HE FASTS AND IS TEMPTED  
BY SATAN.



# The Essential Message of Jesus (Matt 4:12-17)

<sup>12</sup> Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. <sup>13</sup> He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup> so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

# The Essential Message of Jesus

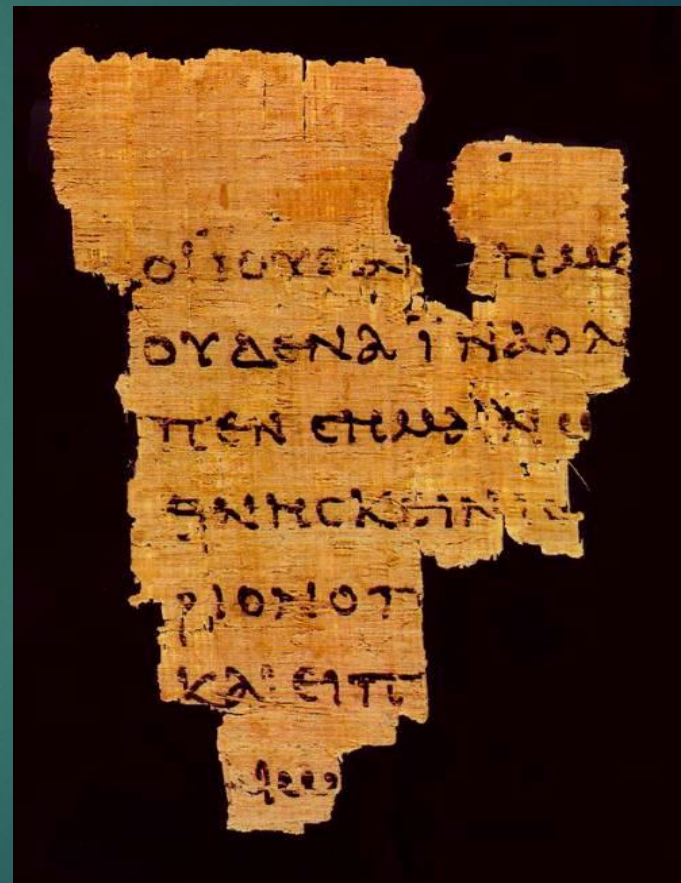
<sup>15</sup> “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,  
on the road by the sea, across the  
Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

<sup>16</sup> the people who sat in darkness  
have seen a great light,  
and for those who sat in the region and  
shadow of death  
light has dawned.”

<sup>17</sup> From that time Jesus began to proclaim,  
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has  
come near.”

# What did Jesus mean by the Kingdom of God?

- ▶ Critical Question
- ▶ Key to understanding Jesus
- ▶ Almost everything he said and did had something to do with the Kingdom



The Kingdom means God's active rule on earth.

The Kingdom of God is the time and place when God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven.



# Points for home . . .

- ▶ The life of Jesus is the beginning of the good news. That means that you and I continue the story. We are invited to become the gospel and step into the story of Scripture. His story is our story too.
- ▶ Repentance is not a single, solitary act that takes place at the beginning of the Christian life. Repentance is daily. We decide every day to turn to God.



# Points for home . . .

- ▶ The Christian life begins with baptism. It marks a turning point in our life. The idea of an unbaptized Christian/follower of Jesus is an oxymoron. Baptism is the proper response to who Jesus is and what he came to do. If you have not been baptized, Easter is a great time to follow Jesus.