

Follow Me Immediately: Mark 1:9-20 Explained

Scriptures for Today

Mark 1:9-20

And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. 10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: 11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. 13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him. 14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. 16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. 18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. 19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. 20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

Introduction — The Book of Mark

The book of Mark moves fast. It shows Jesus in action. It focuses on what Jesus does more than long explanations. You will see words like “straightway” and “immediately” over and over again.

Things move quickly because the focus is on action, obedience, and response. This section shows the beginning of Jesus’ ministry and the calling of His first disciples. And the theme is clear—when Jesus calls, the response should be immediate.

What Happened Before This? (Mark 1:1-8)

Before this, John the Baptist is preaching in the wilderness. He is preparing the way for Jesus. He is calling people to repentance, a change of mind, and baptizing them after they have believed in the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. What did John the Baptist preach?

Acts 19:4

Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

John the Baptist, over and over again, makes it clear that someone greater is coming after him—someone whose shoes he is not worthy to unloose. John the Baptist points to Jesus Christ. That’s what we do here. We do the same. We point to Jesus Christ. He’s the Savior of the world.

The first 8 verses in the Gospel of Mark sets the stage for Jesus to appear. And that's where we're at in the chapter. And this is an awesome set of Scripture that we're going to look at. Please look at these Scriptures closely with me.

Jesus Is Baptized

Mark 1:9

And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

Jesus comes from Nazareth of Galilee. That matters. Nazareth was a low, despised place. It was not known for greatness.

John 1:46

And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?

Jesus did not come from a famous city or a place of honor. He came from a place people looked down on. That shows humility. That shows He did not come the way people expected. Now look at the next part. He is baptized by John. Why? John was preaching repentance and baptizing people who were confessing their sins. But Jesus had no sin.

So why is He being baptized? Why in the world would Jesus, the sinless and perfect Lamb of God, get baptized in water?

Matthew 3:13-15

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

Jesus says, "to fulfil all righteousness." He is doing what is right. He is identifying with the people. He is beginning His ministry the right way. He is not being baptized because He sinned. He is being baptized because He is doing everything according to God's will from the very start. He's setting the example for us. This is the beginning of His public ministry, and He begins it in humility and obedience.

Jesus gets baptized in the Jordan River. The Jordan River has a great history with Israel. The Jordan is where Israel crossed over into the promised land. This represents a transition, a beginning, and a moving into what God has promised. Now you see Jesus stepping into that same place as He begins His ministry.

The Heavens Open — God Speaks

Mark 1:10-11

And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: 11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

"Straightway coming up out of the water." That shows what baptism is. He was in the water and came up out of it. This is immersion, not sprinkling. He goes down into the water and comes up out of the water. Now watch what happens next.

"He saw the heavens opened." God pulls back the curtain. This is not normal. This is a moment where heaven is revealing something. "And the Spirit like a dove descending upon him." The Spirit comes down and rests upon Him. Not as an animal, but in the form of a dove, visible, clear, unmistakable. Gentle and clear.

"And there came a voice from heaven." That is God the Father speaking. "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We know this is God the Father because He says, "Thou art my beloved SON."

Now you have all three persons of the Godhead clearly shown at once: 1) The Son of God, Jesus Christ, is in the water. 2) The Holy Spirit is descending upon Him. 3) God the Father is speaking from heaven. Jesus is not God the Father. Jesus is not the Holy Spirit.

This is a direct declaration from God. Jesus is not becoming the Son here—He is being declared to be the Son. Jesus is the everlasting Son of God. And the Father says He is well pleased with Him. From the very beginning of His ministry, Jesus is doing exactly what is right. This is not just a baptism. This is God revealing exactly who Jesus is right here.

1 John 5:7

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

The Father, the Word who is Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. THREE IN HEAVEN. These three are one. ONE GOD IN 3 PERSONS. This is the Trinity or Three in One. There is one God. The Father is that One God. The Son of God is that One God. The Holy Spirit is that One God.

Driven Into the Wilderness

Mark 1:12

And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

Notice the word “**driveth.**” That is strong. This is not Jesus wandering off. This is not Him choosing a quiet place on His own. The Spirit is actively leading—pushing—sending Him into the wilderness.

And it says “**immediately.**” There is no delay. Right after the Father declares Him the Son of God, right after the Spirit descends upon Him, He is sent straight into testing. That matters. The same Spirit that just came upon Him now drives Him into the wilderness.

This shows you something important. Being led by God does not always take you into comfort. Sometimes it takes you straight into hardship. The Spirit DRIVETH Him into the wilderness. Can the Holy Spirit, who is God, do that? Yes He does it all the time.

The wilderness is not easy. It is isolated. It is dangerous. It is a place of testing. And Jesus goes there under the direction of the Spirit. And Jesus is going to be tested. This is not Satan leading Him there. This is God allowing the testing to happen.

From the very beginning of His ministry, Jesus is not avoiding hardship—He is stepping directly into it, led by the Spirit of God. We should be willing to just go ahead and take on the hard things in life. Face them head on. Fight through them with God leading you. Don't be afraid of things.

Tempted, But Not Defeated

Mark 1:13

And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

“Forty days.” That is not quick. That is not easy. This is prolonged testing. Day after day, Jesus is in the wilderness being tempted of Satan. “Tempted of Satan.” This is direct. Not indirect pressure. Not general hardship. Satan himself is involved in the temptation. This isn't easy. Now look at the environment.

“He was with the wild beasts.” This is not a safe place. This is not comfort. This is danger. Isolation. No protection from the world's standpoint. So you have three things happening at once: 1) Ongoing temptation. 2) A harsh, dangerous environment in the wilderness. 3) Total isolation from normal life. Not easy.

And yet He does not fail. Then it says, “and the angels ministered unto him.” After the temptation, God sends help. The angels come and minister to Him. That shows that even in the hardest moments, God is not absent. He is there for His Son, Jesus Christ. He loves Him.

This verse shows both sides clearly. Real testing. Real hardship. Real temptation. And also real help from God. The same thing can happen for you and does happen for you. Fight through the temptations, win, and God sends angels to minister unto you. He brings comfort.

Jesus Begins Preaching

Mark 1:14-15

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

“Now after that John was put in prison.” That marks a transition. John’s ministry is being shut down, and Jesus’ ministry is now taking center place. The forerunner is removed, and the One he pointed to steps forward.

“Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God.” Jesus is not silent. He is preaching. He is proclaiming good news—the gospel. And it is centered on the kingdom of God. Now look at exactly what He says. “The time is fulfilled.” That means the waiting is over.

Everything the prophets spoke about, everything that was leading up to this moment—it has arrived. This is not just another message. This is the moment history has been building toward. “And the kingdom of God is at hand.” That means it is near. Not distant. Not far off. It is right there in front of them because the King Himself is present. The kingdom of God is at hand. **THE KING IS HERE.**

Now here is the response He commands to the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom of God. “Repent ye, and believe the gospel.” Repent. That means a change of mind. Not believing in the wrong thing. Believing in the right thing. Not believing the Gospel to believing the Gospel.

Believe the gospel. That is the requirement. Not works. Not cleaning up your life first. Believe the good news that God is giving. This is the message from the very beginning of Jesus’ ministry. The time has come. The kingdom is near. Repent and believe. Change your mind and believe. This happens at the same time. The moment you repent is the moment you believe.

The Call — Follow Me

Mark 1:16-17

Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

“Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee.” Jesus is moving. He is not sitting still waiting for people to come to Him. He goes where people are. He isn't lazy. Jesus is always on the move. He got tired in the flesh but He kept working hard.

“He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.” They are working. This is their job. This is their daily life. They are not in a synagogue. They are doing what they have always done, fishing. Notice how Jesus chooses people who work hard. Why

would he choose people to do His work or who won't work? They are working hard. And Jesus sees them.

That matters. He chooses them. They are not seeking Him first—He calls them. Always remember that. The only reason you're here is God called you first. He came for you. And you had a choice. These men here will have a choice.

“And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me.” That is a direct call. Not a suggestion. Not a long explanation. Just a command—follow Me. Come on, follow me. Then He tells them what will change.

“And I will make you to become fishers of men.” They were fishers of fish. That is what they knew. That is their skill. That is their life. And it's similar. Jesus takes what they are and says, I will change that. I will take what you know and turn it into something far greater. You catch fish now—but you are going to bring in people.

That is transformation. Not staying the same. Not adding Jesus to your life while everything stays unchanged. He calls them, and He changes their purpose completely. Working is good but working for Jesus is far better.

Immediate Obedience

Mark 1:18

And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

“Straightway.” Immediately. No delay. No time to think it over. No waiting until later.

“They forsook their nets.” That is not small. Those nets are their livelihood. That is how they make money. That is how they live. They just let it all go. Goodbye nets. Goodbye fishing. They didn't just pause their work. They left it. They walked away from what provided for them.

“And followed him.” That is a full commitment. Not part-time. Not when it's convenient. They left what they knew and followed Jesus. This shows you what real following looks like. When Jesus calls, the right response is not delay. It is not negotiation. It is immediate obedience—even when it costs you something.

They did not say, “Let us finish first.” They did not say, “We'll come later.” They left and followed Him right then. That is the difference.

More Called — Same Response

Mark 1:19-20

And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his

brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. 20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

“When he had gone a little further thence.” Jesus keeps moving and keeps calling. This is not a one-time event. He is actively gathering followers.

“He saw James... and John... mending their nets.” They are not idle. They are working, repairing what they use to make a living. This is preparation for their future work. This is responsibility.

“And straightway he called them.” Same call. Same authority. No long explanation—just a call to follow. “And they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants.”

Now this goes further than the last group. Simon and Andrew left their nets. These men leave their **father**, their **family business**, and their **place in that structure**. This is not just leaving a job—this is leaving family connection and responsibility in that moment. They left their father in the ship.

Notice it says “with the hired servants.” This was an established operation. This wasn’t nothing. They had something going. And they walk away from it. “And went after him.” That is full pursuit. They didn’t just believe something—they moved. They followed. This shows you something clearly.

Following Jesus is not casual as most people treat it. It can cost you your work, your routine, even your closest connections. And when He calls, the right response is still immediate. No delay. No holding back. They left and went after Him.

Practical Applications

1. When Jesus calls, the response should be immediate.
2. Following Jesus requires leaving something behind.
3. Jesus takes ordinary people and gives them a greater purpose.
4. Delayed obedience is not obedience.

Conclusion

Jesus did not call scholars, rulers, or men with status. He called working men—men in the middle of their jobs, men with responsibilities, men with something to lose. And when He called, they did not delay. They did not ask for time. They did not try to hold on to both their old life and Him at the same time. They forsook what they had, and they followed Him. That is the pattern you see in the passage.

When Jesus calls, the right response is not later. It is not when it’s convenient. It is not after you get everything else in order. It is immediate. No hesitation. No excuses. No holding back. He calls—and you follow. Let’s pray.