

The Beloved Son Almighty

Gospel of Mark

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The Gospel of Mark 1. I want to give a little introduction to this and let you know that you're gonna need to really pay attention this morning because I don't have time to go through all the Scripture that I need to go through so to show you the point that I'm trying to make, so this is gonna be more, maybe more sermon-like versus teaching-like as we go through here, so if you allow your mind to be distracted, you're gonna miss it, you're gonna miss beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, you're gonna miss the encouragement, you're gonna miss the transformation, in some cases you may miss being justified here this morning. If you allow yourself to be distracted to where all you hear is words but you know the facts, somebody's telling them to you but you don't see the light of his glory, if you don't see the light of his glory, then you're missing the whole thing because Satan has blinded the minds of them that don't believe, not that they don't acknowledge Christ, not that they don't know some things about Christianity but they can't see and they can't love because love is the evidence of not only being filled with the Spirit, it's the evidence of being born again by his grace. So I want to encourage you to really work at this because, I'm telling you, Satan is gonna try to distract you. Could I just be that bold? Okay, what's happening here is a battle and it's a battle over our souls and it's a battle over our transformation. There's warfare going on, right? And so I want you to pay attention.

What I am gonna do this morning prayerfully by the Spirit of God and by his grace, is we're gonna read chapter 1, verses 12 and 13, and I am going to try to show what these two verses are referring to within the framework of the book of Mark, okay? Then I do think that I'm going to kind of take a little side trip and then in Sundays ahead of us, take a look at what Matthew and Luke are bringing out and learn some things about our battle with the evil one and the temptations that come our way, but this morning I just want to look at this and say, "Okay, here's verses 12 and 13, what is this wanting to communicate to us within the context and the framework of the book of Mark."

So let's pray that the Lord will do this for us here this morning.

Our Father, we do ask for Your marvelous mercies and grace. We pray that there would be a fulfillment of the new covenant in our hearts and lives today. I pray that You would keep us focused, that our minds would not wander not only to sinful things but, Lord, that

our minds would not wander to things that are good things within their own context of life but that You would keep our minds meditating on these verses and focused on what we are hearing. Lord, give us sight to see through our ears this morning and we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mark 1:12-13.

12 Immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness. 13 And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him.

So you'll notice here several truths in verse 12 that the Holy Spirit impelled Christ to go out into the wilderness. This Greek word here that's translated "impelled" 12 times in the book of Mark refers to casting out demons. Okay? So this isn't saying that Jesus was reluctant to do this, like a demon would be reluctant to leave a body in which he is inhabiting, but it does let us know that Jesus was purposeful in what he's doing, that he's going forth in this because the Holy Spirit of God, the third member of the Godhead, is leading, this is what it says in the Gospel of Luke, that he's leading him into the wilderness for whatever is occurring here. So he is impelled.

Verse 13 says that according to Mark three things happened. He was in the wilderness 40 days being tempted by Satan, and again we have a confirmation that he just wasn't tempted at the end of these 40 days even though Matthew says that concerning the three temptations that we are aware of, but that Jesus was tempted throughout all the 40 days. Okay, so this wasn't, you know, Satan kind of waiting around for 40 days, he was tempted day 1 and he was tempted day 2 and he was tempted day 3. And I can imagine, I'm just speculating here but I can imagine that these temptations grew in intensity until finally who shows up? Satan. Okay, so I'm imagining this growth in intensity that is going on here. The second thing that it mentions here that it's not mentioned in other passages is that he was with wild beasts. Okay, and that's interesting, isn't it, that Mark brings that out? Then thirdly, it says that the angels were ministering to him.

So that's all that we have here in the book of Mark which brought me in my observation of these passages to a question that I wasn't sure that there was an answer to but I wanted an answer to this, if there was one, and that is why is Mark's account of Jesus going out in the wilderness to be tempted of Satan so brief? Okay, Luke as we read this for our Scripture reading some 13 verses and has detail to it, doesn't it? Matthew has detail to it but here this is so brief and, you know, the question really is unanswerable because there is no direct purpose statement given in this passage, all we have is a declared narrative. It's like, you know, he's baptized, the Spirit impels him to go out in the wilderness, we have three things going on during those 40 days and we're done. And this is perplexing because if you think about it, when my thoughts were like this, well, if the book of Mark, now please hear me, if the book of Mark was the first written account and most commentators think it is, I'm not sure about that, but most commentators and people today commonly agree that Mark was the first Gospel, as it were, that was written down, if Mark was that first written account, then why is this so brief? Right? If it's the first

written down account you would think, what? That there would be more detail given. And it is commonly agreed upon among commentators and in the history of the church, that the audience for the book of Mark was predominantly Gentiles and, brethren, if that's the case, if anybody would have needed more detail it would have been what group of people, Jew or Gentile? Gentile people, right, because they're pagan. They have no prior understanding of any of this.

So, again, I go back to this question: why so brief? Then the other question that came in my mind is how does this brevity of these two verses add to the theme of the book of Mark because the theme is verse 1, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." So how in the world does the brevity of this passage add to this theme and then why, I just mentioned this, why three statements concerning his wilderness compulsion, 40 days tempted of the devil, 40 days with wild beasts and 40 days being served by angelic beings? It's just like here's a statement, here's a statement, here's a statement, we're done.

("We're done.") We're not that done.

Right? So I hope you mind to this point that you're not distracted but you're actually thinking along with me. Why, why this brevity? You see, because when you read this, you've got Christian teaching background, you're thinking Matthew, you're thinking Luke, right, you're thinking all these other passages but if this is the first book written and this is all you've got, you'd be hungering for more details, wouldn't you, especially if you had no background.

So the first thing that I did is I looked at the other narratives, right? Matthew and Luke. Is there anything in those two accounts that might illumine my understanding of why this is so brief? And again, I want to remind us that it's commonly understood that this is what Gospel is the very first Gospel penned down, written down. So I looked and, you know, I found that in Matthew, look at verse 13 of Mark 1, that Matthew mentions the angels ministering to him although in Matthew it says that it was at the end of the temptation. Both Matthew and Luke detail the final three temptations by Satan himself. Luke agrees with Mark by pointing out that Jesus was tempted throughout the 40 days, whereas Matthew just waits and says at the end of those 40 days, he hungered and Satan came. Neither Matthew or Luke mention wild beasts.

So I looked at those passages and I was looking for something to give illumination to this and I came up empty and I'm going through all this detail not only to show you perhaps how to study your Bible and to ask questions of it, but also to show how the Lord might show the answer to this because there is an answer to this and I think that when you see the answer, you're first of all going to say, "Well, I'm not sure but I'm hoping that by the end of the message you're gonna say amen."

So I came up empty so then my second thing I said to myself was, alright, I've already looked at the other narratives, I looked at the harmony to see if there's any details that might help me out with this, then the second thing that came to my mind was, alright, is

there anything in the previous verses in Mark that might clue me to something? Okay, in other words, I'm looking at the context, the flow of the argument here. So I thought to myself, well, if there is something running through the previous verses, then Mark could be brief because he would anticipate that you and I would have picked up on that truth and just brought that truth all the way through these two brief verses that are here, and what I found is my answer.

First of all in the Gospel of Mark, he gives us the theme. This is the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. We have a declaration, a bold propositional statement that is out there, then Mark gives to us scriptural proof that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Son and that he is the Lord of the Old Testament. So if you look at verse 1, you have Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I've got this bracketed here in my Bible and I've got the word Jesus and then in verse 2, I've got "of You" there, I've got that bracketed with the low lying connective there so that I know that when it says, "Behold, I send My messenger ahead of You," I know the "You" is who? The "You" is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. When I read, "who will prepare Your way," I read "Your way" as Jesus Christ, the Son of God's way. Then in verse 3 I see the connection that the "You" of verse 2 is the "Lord" of verse 3, "I will make ready the way of the Lord." Does everybody see that? Okay, you remember that message? I see that connection there and this is the way Mark is coming down to show us that he is the Son of God. Then I come down and I'm introduced to this man named John the Baptist and John the Baptist notes three things about the one who is coming. He notes that, "This One will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." Okay, everybody following me there? Then he notes his worthiness. He says, "I am not fit to stoop down and untie the throng of his sandals." So the one who's coming is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit, the one who's coming is the one who is worthy of whom however great John is, he's not even worthy to be in the same room, as it were, he's not even worthy to bow down before this one, and then here is what I think is the thread that is running in and that is when John says, "After me One is coming who is mightier than I." Does everybody see that?

So I think what he's saying here is, Look, here's Jesus Christ, the Son of God, he's the Lord of the Old Testament. He's the one that will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. He's the one that I, John, am neither worthy to bow down and untie his sandals and I'm telling you that this one is mightier than I." In fact, the Gospel of John states that John the Baptist said, "He is of higher rank than I am because He existed before me." So what John is thinking here, now follow me, John is saying, "It is mine. This Jesus, the Son of God, the beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased, that He is the Lord of the Old Testament and the way we know He's the Lord of the Old Testament and the way I'm gonna prove to you that He's the Son of God is that I'm going to show you He is almighty."

Now folks, if I've come down through all that and I have picked this up and then I read verses 12 and 13, it should not surprise me that not only is it brief, but I come out reading verses 12 and 13 saying, "How mighty is He? He's mightier than Satan." Does everybody see that? And he is the one that is worthy to have angelic beings being ministered to him and not only is he mightier than Satan, he's mightier than the wild beasts that are out

there in the wilderness. He is the Almighty One and this is why I entitled the message, "The Beloved Son Almighty." I didn't say the beloved Son being tempted. I think that is the point of Matthew and Luke but it's not the point in the book of John, I don't think. This is the beloved Son almighty because, now that we've gone away from why is this so brief, it's brief because we ought to have seen what John said. It's brief because we go through these two verses knowing in our mind this is the one, this is the Almighty One, this is Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

So he was tempted for 40 days. What would you expect to happen? He'd win, right? He was with the wild beasts. Would you expect the wild beasts to make breakfast of him? You wouldn't expect that, would you? And would you expect that the angelic beings would minister to such a one who was of higher rank than all? Yes. So the brevity of that is possibly answered by this answer, that he is the Almighty, he is the Beloved Son Almighty.

Now having that in your mind, now I want to prove it to you and the way I proved it to you, I told this to Nick. He was working on, well, he was actually working on several passages in preparation for last week and what was funny, Brother Nick, is that Greg told me you were preaching on X passage, you told me you were preaching on Y passage, and he ended up preaching on Z. Okay?

So here we are and what we know here, brethren, is this, look at verse 12, "Immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness." Now follow this. This Jesus is not presented as someone reluctant, right? He's purposely, volitionally submitting and he's going forth. In other words, this Jesus isn't some reluctant, weak, feeble Christ who is under assault by Satan. It's Jesus assaulting Satan. Everybody follow me? Satan isn't coming to Jesus for battle. Jesus is going forth to him. So he's impelled. This is of the Holy Spirit's leading. Jesus is directly compelled to confront Satan on his own territory which is the wilderness. This is a warrior going off for, what? For battle. You see, I think in our mind we have this thing, here's Jesus, he's not eating so he's out there and he's weak, and he was weak bodily. He's out there, you know, in the wilderness. He's out there all isolated and he's just kind of sitting around and then Satan seeing that he's kind of weak and isolated in his humanity, he comes to him and says, "I gotcha!" And Satan comes to him and assaults him with this temptation. No, my friend, Jesus is going out to assault him.

Now let me start proving this to you. You're here in Mark, we're gonna jump forward a couple of chapters. Go to Mark 3. So the point of Mark isn't that Jesus is being tempted, the point of the book of Mark isn't about the details of the temptation, that's not what Mark wants to show. He wants to show the Son of God's might, that he's going forth to assault the highest angelic being who fell because sin was found in him. The one who deceived the first Adam, our parents. The one who wants to take over whose throne? The throne of God. He goes forth to directly assault him and, brethren, our Lord referred to this. In Mark 3:20, "He came home, and the crowd gathered again, to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal. When His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, 'He has lost His senses.'" That's a way of saying

he's insane. Verse 22, "The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, 'He is possessed by Beelzebul,' and 'He casts out the demons,'" there is our word "impelled." He impels demons. He casts them out "by the ruler of the demons." Okay, everybody see that? Okay. Now look at verse 23, "And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables." He's a question, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished!" So in three verses what has Jesus kept saying? Satan can't stand if he's divided, right? Okay.

Now look at verse 27, "But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house." Does everybody see verse 27? Okay, now follow me: the word "strong" here is the same word for "might." So what Jesus is saying here is this, in verse 27, who's the strong man? Who is the first strong man? But no one can enter the strong man's house, who is that strong man? Satan. No one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, who's that strong man? Satan. And then he will plunder his house. Well, folks, here's a simple little question. Are you ready? If he's the strong man and Jesus comes along and binds that strong man so that he can plunder his house and take his possessions, how strong is Christ? Weaker? Stronger. Everybody following me? And what is happening here is this, that in that wilderness journey, Jesus binds the strong man, okay, because in the rest of this Gospel we're gonna go through here and mankind is amazed because he's casting out devils, and when those devils are cast out later on, Mark 4, it says that when the unclean spirits came before him, they cried out, "You are the Son of God." They're acknowledging his superiority, his authority, his might. And brethren, greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Everybody with me this far?

So here we have this might, so Jesus is going out in the wilderness, the wilderness was commonly seen as the location of devils, I've already mentioned that in a previous message. The wilderness represented the place of the curse. It was barren. It was dead. It was unsatisfying. It was fruitless. It was isolated, right? It was full of untamed animals and these animals, many people conjecture, would include wild boars and jackals and wolves and foxes and leopards and packs of hyenas that would sense that here is somebody out there undefended, weak. So I'm not saying that there wasn't any testing here, I'm not saying there wasn't any proving, but I am saying this, that in the book of Mark Jesus is not waiting for the temptation, Jesus is going after the strong man because he wants to bind that strong man to plunder his house because he has possessions, us. Folks, these are the only weapons that Satan has. Satan only has God's own law which places us all under condemnation and Satan's only weapon is to use God's word in such a way that the soul that sins shall die. That's his only weapon.

So Jesus goes forth and he goes forth to assault the devil. He's impelled by the Holy Spirit to do this. He goes in there for 40 days. He's being constantly tempted. For 40 days he's constantly with wild beasts. Does he live? Yes. He's the Mighty One. For 40 days the angels are ministering to him because, folks, we've got to understand, I think we miss this sometimes, that it's not just enough for Jesus to win people to himself through repentance

and faith. That's not enough because we don't wrestle with flesh and blood but against powers, principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places, places of higher rank than we are, angelic beings who are lost and condemned but are more powerful than you and I can even think of. And as one commentator wrote, I love this, it's like Jesus went forth to assault Satan and then basically he says this to the evil one, "Here I am. Try your worst. You'll find no fault in me." That's the battle, isn't it? Because Satan's only weapon is to have him fall through temptation and if he falls, he's under the sentence of condemnation, death, and Satan is the winner, right, because Jesus is the Lord. So what we see here is that at the end of this, it's like Mark just wrote down in neon lights, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and I'm gonna prove it to you by showing you that He is the Almighty One."

Now it's that might that Mark parades before us in this book. I went through the whole book of Mark, there is over 30 scenarios that show the might and the status that Jesus is the Son of God in this book. Let me just give you the categories of this because, folks, it's his might that confirms his sonship, right? If he's the Son of God, if he's the Lord in human flesh, then what would you expect to see? Strength, right? Power.

And so, first of all, Mark parades before us that Jesus has all authority. I love this. Does Christ have authority? Are the angelic beings ministering before him? Not only does he have authority, folks, this is amazing, he actually grants as a gift to those that are under him, the disciples, the authority to cast out devils and to heal all diseases. Folks, if you're gonna give someone authority to do powerful things like that, then that means you're the one that has all authority, right? I mean, he hasn't gotten to the place where he has all authority yet. In Matthew 28, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and earth," but he has authority as the Son of God at this point. That would be like me saying to you, saying to you, "Now, I'm giving you the authority to go out and cast out devils," and you would say, "Okay," and it doesn't work, right, because I'm not the Almighty One, right? My power if I have any power is delegated power, but here Jesus has that authority to grant authority. He has authority and he's under authority and he grants authority for them to do.

Not only is he the mighty authoritative one, he is the mighty provider. This is amazing. You just think about this. There is two feedings of multitudes recorded in the Gospel in the book of Mark and at the first feeding 5,000 people are fed in the wilderness from five loaves and two small fishes and, folks, when you think loaves, don't think supermarket, you know, nice sliced, you know, loaf, okay? These are little pancake type loaves. He had five of them and two small fishes. Five pancake sized loaves and how big were the fish? Are you ready? Sardine. Okay, now I've never tasted a sardine because I don't even like the smell of sardines. I figure if the smell is bad, the sardine's gotta be worse. I asked somebody, "What is a sardine?" They said, "A dying fish." Well, I ate my fish already dead, okay? So here how big is a sardine? Okay, so you have two of those. Now think with me, brethren, don't just sit here and say, "Well, of course He can do that." Engage. Two of those, okay, and five loaves, small pancake sized loaves of bread, and all 5,000 men were fed and there was 12 baskets left over and the Bible says that all of them ate until all of them were fully satisfied. What do you think about that kind of might?

And the disciples said to him, "Two hundred day's wages aren't enough to feed all these people." So I did some monkeying around with the numbers and tried to calculate how much would that be. This would be, folks, like I said to you, "Feed the people." I tell the deacons, "Feed the people. Here's your five loaves, two little fishes, and feed the people." And I calculated that it would have taken \$27,800 to provide 11,120 loaves of bread. And I can see our treasurer. "Pastor, \$28,800, that wouldn't even be enough to feed all these people." In fact, that's more than our general fund, I think. And Jesus said, "Make them sit down." And so you come up to me and I just keep handing bread, I just keep handing the fish.

Folks, what do you think about a man like that? I'm telling you, can Jesus provide? This is the might of Christ that is doing this, and in the second feeding, there was over 4,000 people and there were 7 baskets left over and when Jesus warned the disciples, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees," they're thinking, "Oh no, we didn't take bread on this trip," and he's like, "Don't you remember?" Folks, what kind of might is that?

Not only does Jesus have authoritativeness that proves he's the Son of God, not only does he give provision and that makes him, declares him the Son of God, it confirms his sonship, but Jesus can command the material world. Here in the Gospel of Mark, he just commands a fierce gale of wind with waves breaking over the boat. He just commands it, "Peace. Be still." And what happened? Try that next time we have a storm through Richmond. Just go out on your back porch. You know, if our brother is really spiritual, and you can tell him this, go out on the back porch and just have him lift up his hands, you don't even have to lift your hands up, just have him yawn and say, "Peace. Be still." And suddenly, what? Folks, if you're gonna do that, you've got power. You've got might, right?

And not only that but there's another occasion where Jesus is walking on the water and what's amazing about this to me, and it's kind of a twisted way I think, what's amazing to me isn't that he's walking on the water, what's amazing to me is that the Bible says that he was walking on the water in the face of stiff wind. In other words, he's just not like walking on the water, there's a wind that is blowing contrary to him, so contrary the disciples couldn't get the boat to move forward. But here's Jesus, he's just, not only is he walking on the water, that shows power, yes, but he's just...and he goes as if he's going to walk past the boat. He's walking faster than the disciples were trying to row that boat against the fierce gale of the wind and he walks through there. He has a command over the material world.

Then he heals all disease. This category of reigning over disease is the one that is mentioned just under our next category as the most frequent display of his power. Let me mention, this is just from the book of Mark, Jesus heals completely people with fevers, leprosy, paralytics, withered hands, unhealable hemorrhages, blood-letting, and Mark just says general sicknesses on people who can't get out of bed. People were touching the fringe of Jesus' cloak and being healed. He handled deaf people so that they could hear and mute people so that they could speak and blind people so that they could heal, and

finally just Mark exhausted and in one category he says this, "Jesus healed all kinds of diseases." He's Lord over cancer cells. Amen? He's Lord over our diseases. I'm telling you that shows might. That's his power.

Not only does he reign over our sicknesses but he is the strong one who is destroying the works of the devil. 1 John says that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil and is that not what he's doing? Disease, the work of the devil, what does Jesus do? He heals. Storms, hurricanes, catastrophes in the material world, earthquakes, volcanoes, Jesus says, "Peace. Be still." He's Lord, amen?

He's the Almighty One and the most frequent category in the book of Mark is that he cast out devils. I love this. The very first thing we're gonna approach in just probably a couple of months from now is an unclean spirit in the synagogue. The very first thing. Mark 1, he mentions this. He tells that spirit to come out of him. Isn't that amazing? But think about this: there's a lady here named Mary of Magdalene and the Bible says there were seven devils in her. Alright, it's one thing for you to cast out one devil but what if you had a group of seven? It's seven against one. What do you think? Where are you gonna put your odds on? Jesus cast them out with a word. Is he not almighty? Is he not the Mighty One?

Or I love this, you know this, there's a demoniac coming out of the tombs and Jesus says, "What is your name?" He says, "Legion," because there were 6,000 devils in him. Alright, he cast out one devil, okay. To cast out seven, you say, "Oh pastor, anybody can cast out seven." Alright, what about 6,000 of them? What about 1,000 of them? What about 10,000? What about 20? What do you think? I don't care what mass of strength that you can gather in numbers, Jesus is Lord over all that. Why? He is the Almighty One.

And here's something even amazing. Are you ready for this? There's a daughter, Jairus' daughter, who dies. How strong is death? And Jesus walked into that room and says, "Quit crying. She's sleeping." And they laughed him to scorn. You say, "What did He do? Did He do incantations? Did He clap His hands? Did He stomp His feet? What did He do?" I'm gonna tell you what he did, are you ready? He looked at that body and said, "Little girl, I say to you get up." That's all he said and what happened? She didn't like me in the morning, she didn't do that. She was like moan over, right? She got up. He's Lord over death and not only is he Lord over death, I love this, at the end of this book who comes up from the dead on the third day? He did. He's the Lord. He gives life. You can't kill him. Death cannot hold him. He is the Almighty One.

Folks, do you see this? This is the point of the whole book. He's just showing you his authority. He's showing you the might of his provision. He's showing you the might of his commanding over the material world. He's showing you that he reigns over all disease. He's showing you that he's destroying the works of the devil. He's showing you that he's life. "I am the Almighty One and because I am the Almighty One, it confirms I am the Son of God. Believe in Me." And we walk away saying, "That's nice." If that's your thought right now, you're not seeing because, brethren, these categories that I gave you, now please follow this, his authority, his provision, his rule over the catastrophes of life,

disease, death, these are all the things you and I fear. This is what we fear. We fear dying, right? Have you ever said, "Well, I just want to be with Jesus, I just don't like the process of getting there"? Right. There's a fear of dying. How many of you say, "Boy, I can't wait to get sick. I just want to get sick, I just want to get weak, I want to lose my hearing, I want to lose my walking, I want to get dizzy. You know, I just love those things." No, you dread it. When you think about getting old, you're saying to yourself, "I don't want to get dementia. I don't want to get Alzheimer's. I don't want these diseases that come on me." We fear those things. We fear not having enough to eat. We fear catastrophes, storms and hurricanes. Everybody's fine as long as it's just natural old rain but the snow is coming and we get alerted and we're, you know, we're just fearful of all these things. We fear the government and the authorities, that they might execute us. We fear starving to death. We fear that fire might take our house and our goods. We fear that cancer might kill us or death might come up us, or that the second death might come and, brethren, the world's ultimate penalty against you is to kill you. Satan's ultimate weapon is death but Jesus is Lord. He is the Almighty One and Hebrews says this, "That since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same through death that He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is the devil and might free those who through fear of death were subject to its slavery."

This is why he came. In other words, brethren, he is impelled to go out into the wilderness to assault our great enemy, to bind the strong man so that what we have in the book of Mark is Christ directly confronting Satan and this does nothing more, nothing less than tell you over and over, "He is the Son of God." Amen? He is the Son of God. He is the Almighty One who defeated and binded Satan. He is the Messiah who defeated the prince of the world, the prince of the power of the air. He is the prince of devils and when the devils came out, they kept saying to him, "You are the Son of God." They had, as it were, to bow before his authority and bow before his might.

So I want to ask you a question: why can't you believe in such a one as this? Why are you satisfied with some kind of moralistic, you know, do right type of religion when in reality what you need is to be saved from your sins? Why do you think that a sin is of greater might than Christ? I was witnessing several times over a course of several months with a man who was enslaved in homosexual relationship and one of the days that I was talking to him, he kept saying, "I can't stop what I'm doing. I can't stop this behavior." I just asked him, "Why in the world do you think that your sin is mightier than Jesus?" Right? If Jesus can't save him from that sin, then it means that that sin has greater power than the Son of God and I just proved to you that Jesus is almighty, right? Why do you doubt what he says? Why do you think that he can't give you new life? Christian, why do you think he can't care for you? He is the Savior. He is the Lord of glory. He is the Son of God and, brethren, I'm telling you, what I just gave to you is the best news in all the world, that this Almighty One is for you and, brethren, if you're born again, if God is for you, who can be....?"

Now as we go back and finish Mark 1:12-13, this is why it's so brief. This one is mightier than John. This one is not worthy to stoop down and untie the throng of his sandals. This one is the one who commands baptizes with the third member of the Godhead. This one

is the one who was of higher rank than John because he existed before me. This is the one that the Holy Spirit drives out into the wilderness to assault the devil, 40 days being tempted by him, and he was with the wild beasts and Satan didn't overcome him, and the wild beasts didn't overcome him, and the angels of God were ministering to him. This is the Almighty One, Jesus, the one predicted.

But the battle's not over. Let me ask you this, did he bind the strong man? Was he plundering his house? Was he healing the diseases? Was he casting out devils not by the prince of the devils but by his almighty power? Yes or no? But folks, the strong man is just bound. He has one weapon left, death, and the Son of Man is gonna lay his hands out and yield his body to death to show, "O death, where is your victory?" And he rises from the dead on the third day because death could, Peter says this, death could not hold him. It's coming. We have three years of ministry and it's done.

So Christian, what do you fear? The strong man has been bound. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Was he raised? Your body will be raised. To be absent from the body. You don't have to worry about the devil stealing you. You're his and he is mine. One commentator wrote, "The battle's not over, the decisive victory is yet to come."

Let's pray.