

# The Beloved Son

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[ 0 : 00 ] morning. My name is Matthew Capone, and I'm the pastor here at Cheyenne Mountain Presbyterian Church, and it's my joy to bring God's Word to you today. A special welcome if you're new or visiting with us. We're glad that you're here, and we're glad that you're here not because we're trying to fill seats, but because we're following Jesus together as one community. And as we follow Jesus together, we become convinced that there's no one so good they don't need God's grace, and no one so bad they can't have it, which is why we come back week after week to see what God has to say to us in His Word. We're continuing now in our series on the Gospel of Mark, so I invite you to turn there with me now. You remember that the Gospel of Mark tells the story of Jesus in His life and His death and His resurrection. And when we talk about Jesus, we're not talking about an idea or an abstraction or a theory. We're talking about a real man who lived in real time and real space.

So last week, I mentioned the fact that He was born in a town called Bethlehem, which is five to six miles south of Jerusalem, and He grew up in a town called Nazareth, 64 to 65 miles north of Jerusalem.

That's just to give us a sense of reality, right? I'll tell you this week, Jesus had brothers and sisters. In fact, He was one of at least seven kids. So if you come from a large family, Jesus knows what that's like. If you have both brothers and sisters, Jesus knows what that's like as well.

Now you notice I said at least seven brothers or sisters. Why did I say at least, and why did I not give you an exact number? That's a great question. I'll tell you next week. Okay, we're coming to Mark chapter 1. You remember we're asking two questions. We're asking who is Jesus, and how do we respond to Him? And last week, we saw that Jesus is our Savior. He came with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which means that He had the power to do real change in us. He had the power of the Holy Spirit. And so we talked about the fact that Jesus is the doctor. He told us in Mark chapter 2, verse 17, He's come not for the righteous, but for the sinners, because those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. And so you'll remember we talked about if you are interested in Jesus, you have to admit real need. That is the price of admission. You can take the class, or you can audit it. If you want to take Jesus' class, you have to come with humility, admitting and confessing your sins. This week, we're going to come with those same questions, who is Jesus? And we're going to see two things. Jesus is both our King, and He is our Redeemer. He's our King, and He's our Redeemer.

It's with that, I invite you to turn with me to Mark chapter 1. We're going to be starting at verse 9 and going through verse 11. You can turn with me in your worship guide near the end. You can turn in your Bible, or you can turn on your phone. Regardless of where you turn, remember that this is God's Word.

[ 2 : 49 ] And God tells us that His Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, which means that God has not left us to stumble alone in the dark, but instead He's given us His Word to show us the way to go. And so I invite you to read with me now, starting at verse 9.

In those days, Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when He came up out of the water, immediately He saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on Him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, You are my beloved Son. With you, I am well pleased.

I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's Word. Our Father in Heaven, we thank You and praise You that Jesus was a real man, is a real man who lived in real time and real space. And we thank You that You have given us Your Word, His words, that we would know the way to go. We ask that You would use this passage this morning to strengthen us and encourage us and also to challenge us. You would show us our points of need for Your grace, and You'd show us how You meet us at those very same points of need. And we thank You most of all that we don't have to earn these things or deserve them, but instead we can simply ask for them in Jesus' name. Amen. Of all the many sad things that happened in 2020, you might remember one of them what happened at the very beginning of November, which is that Alex Trebek finally died.

And if you know the name Alex Trebek, you know he's the host of Jeopardy! for 37 years, this iconic game show. However, growing up, we did not watch Jeopardy! as a family. And so there was a joke that people would say or use that I had to have explained to me. And you might be familiar with this joke.

It's not something you tell, but it's something you sing. There's times when someone might, and I'm going to do this, they might start humming. And I won't continue because there's enough suffering in the world without you hearing me say the rest of it. But what are people trying to do or say when they hum the Jeopardy! song? Well, they're poking you. They're saying a couple things. First of all, maybe it's time for you to finally make a decision. You have taken way too long. And so instead of just saying that, I'm going to hum the song. They might be saying, you know, this is just a long process. We've got to figure it out, right? But in doing that, they don't have to explain anything else. No one hums the Jeopardy! theme song.

[ 5 : 23 ] And then says, by the way, this is the theme song from Jeopardy! which was hosted by Alex Trebek. And he did it for 37. They don't do any of the things that I just explained to you. Nothing else needs to be explained, right? You can hear four notes and it calls up all these other pieces of information. It's so known and recognized that nothing else needs to be said. This morning as we look in verses 9 through 11, this is what is going on in this passage. There are some notes that are being played that call up all sorts of pieces of information and background. We are going to see here quotes from the Old Testament that are just a few notes from much larger songs. That's what we're going to dive into here. And it's important to understand as we read the Gospel of Mark, some people like to think of the New Testament as more important than the Old Testament. It's in fact critical for us to understand the Old Testament as we read the New Testament because these are Old Testament songs that are being sung. I'll give you an example. There's a show that's recently come out called

WandaVision, which if I remember correctly is based on Marvel Comics. I haven't watched it, so I'm just I'm trying to nerd up here. And my housemate was watching it and he was multiple episodes in and I was sitting down with him for a minute to watch it with him. And he started trying to explain it to me and he finally just said, you know, honestly, if you don't watch it from the beginning, it's going to be kind of impossible to understand. Now the Bible can stand by itself. The Gospel of Mark can stand by itself, so I don't mean to intimidate you. But unless we understand its Old Testament background, we are not going to fully grasp what is going on here. We have to know these few notes that are being sung to understand what Mark is telling us. And so we're going to see again those two notes, first the king and then the redeemer. First the king. One of our notes we have here, and we're going to jump to verse 11. God speaks over Jesus here and says, you are my beloved son. You're my beloved son.

When we hear this word son being caught up, God calling someone his son, that's just a few notes of a larger song that goes throughout the Old Testament. And the idea of God's son in the Old Testament is the idea of the king. We see this in 2 Samuel 7, verse 14. David is referred to as God's son that he's established on his throne. Even more important though is the background of Psalm 2, which we read earlier this morning. And if you were with us, summer of 2019, we looked at Psalm 2 in detail. And Psalm 2 is about God putting his king in Zion to rule over the nations. And he says in verse 7, you are my son. And so we hear just this one note from this declaration. And immediately those who are familiar with the Old Testament think, aha, this is talking about God's son. This is talking about the king. The promises of Psalm 2, that there's going to be a king who rules over all the nations, that promise is fulfilled now in Jesus. He is the ultimate king that David looked forward to.

And so Mark is able in this very short, compressed section, just three verses in that statement, to communicate all of those things to us. The point is this. When Jesus operates in this world, he operates as the king. He is not just coming as a savior. He is not just coming as someone to teach. He is the fulfillment of Psalm 2, coming as the king of both heaven and earth. You think Jesus is a great teacher?

Amen. Jesus is a great teacher. He's the best teacher. He's also the king. You think that Jesus is a savior? Yes, Jesus is the savior. He's the greatest savior. You know what? He's also the king.

[ 9 : 27 ] You think Jesus is kind and loving and humble? Yes. Amen. Jesus is kind and loving and humble. He's also the Psalm 2 king who's going to come and bring justice to the nations. People will say things like, Jesus is my king. Now, that's a wonderful thing to say. I hope Jesus is your king.

You know what? Jesus isn't just your king. Jesus is the king. And he is the king, whether you like it or not. He is coming to fulfill Psalm 2. And so it's hard for us to get expansive of enough of a view of vision of Jesus. It's hard to get a large enough vision of him because what we see in Psalm 2 is something so great it could only be filled by someone divine. Something so great you might begin to doubt if it could actually be a reality. And I've mentioned a lot of different things from Psalm 2, which shows us what this looks like. This king rules over the nations. This king brings justice. He defeats the wicked. Everyone around the world comes to worship and be with this king. Okay, this is also, by the way, in Psalm 2, if you remember, the nations come to oppose this king. So it's not just that he comes in victory. But there are people who hate him, who fight against him. The nations scoff and laugh at him. What's going on right here in the Gospel of Mark, and the reason I'm going through this so slowly, is in this very beginning introduction, Mark is giving us the framework that we need to understand Jesus. Yes, we're going to get to miracles. Yes, we're going to get to healings. Yes, we're going to get to Jesus' teachings. And as we look at those things, we have to understand who he is.

We are looking last week, this week, and next week at Jesus' identity. And so this begins to make sense. As we go forward in the Gospel of Mark, we're going to look back on this section. Oh, Jesus gives sight to someone who's blind? Well, of course he does. That makes sense, right? He's the king.

Jesus is going to care about people from every tribe and tongue and nation? Well, of course he's going to do that. He's the Psalm 2 king that every people group comes to. And so this is, in some ways, just a background of what's to come later in the Gospel. Jesus casts out demons? Well, of course he does. He's the greatest king, right? He's going to have authority over everything and everyone.

And so for us, Jesus as the king means if you are here this morning, for anyone in this world, there is either relief or rejection. There's either relief or rejection. If you remember the very end of Psalm 2, it says this in verse 12, kiss the son lest he be angry and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. One thing we're going to see as we go through the Gospel of Mark, it's been pointed out that as we reach the end, the responses of people to Jesus become more extreme. That is, either they grow in their love for Jesus or they grow in their rejection of Jesus. And the point for us is to highlight that as we encounter Jesus, those are our only two choices. There's a sense in which, I've told you before, knowledge is dangerous. There's a sense in which it is dangerous for you to be here and to be walking with us through the Gospel of Mark.

[ 12 : 55 ] Because what we see in the Bible is that one of those two things becomes true. You will not leave the journey, the story of Scripture unchanged. Either you will grow in your love of Jesus and see his beauty more and more, or you will grow in your rejection of Jesus, and you will dislike him and despise him more and more. But what we learn about this king is you can either take refuge in him or you can perish. You can take refuge in him or you can perish. Those are the only two options for this king. If you have relief, you're those who take refuge. You can say, hey, evil is going to come to an end. There is a God, a man, a king who's powerful enough to put all evil away. He's able to make it right. Or you face rejection. The words of Psalm 2, verse 12, become true. You perish in the way. There's no middle ground with Jesus, in other words.

You have to pick where you fall, what your opinion and your thought of him is. I'll leave it there because we're going to continue to visit that as we continue in this gospel. It's going to accelerate more and more as we make our way to the end. For those of us who do consider ourselves Christians, those who seek refuge in the king, the response for us, remember we're asking the question, how do we respond to Jesus? One of our responses is what we're doing this morning. We worship him.

We just sung several songs worshiping Jesus as king. Not only do we come and worship him, we also listen to him. If he is the king, if this is truly providing us with the framework we need for the rest of the gospel, then we want our ears to be open. We need to be attentive to what Jesus has to teach us here in this book. It's setting the stage for the rest of the story to come. There is no one who's going to go unchallenged by Jesus. All of us are going to hear things from Jesus that we don't like.

All of us are going to be called to do and be things by Jesus that we don't want to do and be. It's in those moments as we walk through this true story together that we come back to verse 11 and remember, yes, I don't like what Jesus has to say here, and I know that he is the king. I know he's God's beloved son. Not only is Jesus the king, though, he is also the redeemer. There's another note that's being sung here, just a few notes from another larger song of the Old Testament, and that's from a song that we find in Isaiah. We see here not just that he's the beloved son, we're also told, with you, I am well pleased. And this is a reference to Isaiah chapter 42, verse 1.

And if you're familiar with the book of Isaiah, if you're an old timer, as I like to call anyone who's been here more than a year, you were with us in 2017. At the very end of 2017, during Advent, we looked at the four servant songs of Isaiah, which are portions in Isaiah. It's chapters 42, 49, 50, 52, and 53, that give these songs about a servant. As we saw in 2017, those are songs about Jesus. Isaiah chapter 42, verse 1, is the very first verse of the very first song.

[ 16 : 33 ] So what we're hearing is just the first few notes, but it pulls up, it brings up everything that we learn about the servant in Isaiah. And so everything that's true of that servant is being applied here to Jesus. And that servant, the focus there is not on his kingship, but on the fact that he comes to suffer. So if you're looking at Isaiah 42, verse 1, you'll see a few things. First of all, it's the one in whom my soul delights, is what's said. That's where we see the echo of my beloved son.

We're also told that this servant, God says, I have put my spirit upon him. This helps us understand why the Holy Spirit is descending in this passage. We could have a whole sermon about that. One of the reasons the Holy Spirit is descending is because that's what's true of the servant in Isaiah.

It's this fulfillment, just like we saw last week, the fulfillment of the prophecies. And we see the same thing. There's an overlap between Psalm 2 and Isaiah chapter 42, because 42 says he will bring justice to the nations. So we have this same king, but with a different emphasis, not on his rule and destruction of evil, although it appears here, but on his suffering and his dying. In fact, that's what we see. If you were paying close attention, our passage this morning for our assurance of pardon came from Isaiah chapter 53. And I'm going to read the larger section now so we understand what is being taught here about Jesus. This is from chapter 53, verses 3 through 6.

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. As one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace.

And with his wounds, we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. In other words, Jesus is not just the king who's come to bring justice. He's also the king who's come to receive justice. He is going to take upon himself the punishment that his people deserve. All we like sheep have gone astray. We are all people who've sinned. We're all people who've rebelled against God. We all deserve to be crushed like the nations in Psalm chapter 2. And this king is not just going to crush. He's going to be crushed.

[ 19 : 22 ] He is going to receive the penalty of sin. That's why it says, verse 5, with his wounds, we are healed. As we're looking at the identity of Jesus, last week we saw he had the power to change us. He comes with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is what works in our lives to change our hearts and our minds. Here we see not that he comes with the power to change, but that he pays for the change. Last week we saw he had the power to change. This week we see he pays for the change. And he's going to pay for the change with his own life, with his own blood. This answers another question for us. You might have noticed I skipped to verse 11.

And we have before that, though, verses 9 and 10, where Jesus gets baptized. And this raises a question people have been asking for a long time. Why in the world does Jesus have to get baptized?

We talked about last week, baptism is the way that we say we're in need. We're sinners who need forgiveness. Jesus isn't a sinner and he doesn't need forgiveness. So why in the world is he getting baptized? Yes, that's the point. Jesus comes and does what he doesn't have to do. Jesus comes and does what is appropriate for us. He receives what we should receive. So just as we deserve God's punishment, but Jesus takes it for us, he is giving a signal of that at the very beginning. We need baptism.

Jesus associates with our need by receiving baptism as well. Yes, it doesn't make sense. That's the point. Yes, Jesus shouldn't be baptized. He doesn't need to. That's the point. He chooses to do what he doesn't have to do all the way to his death on the cross. Jesus takes the place of sinners. That's the point.

Sinners get baptized. Jesus takes their place. Jesus gets baptized as well. And so there's a contradiction in a sense. There's two things that don't really make sense together here in this passage. Jesus as king and redeemer are two things that shouldn't go together. On the one hand, he is the great king of the entire world. On the other hand, he comes from this obscure place. We're told he came from Galilee in verse 9. We're going to go off into a whole rabbit trail about this, but he comes from Galilee, which is different than where people were coming to be baptized by John. They were coming from Judea.

[ 22 : 00 ] Galilee is not where you would expect this great king to come from. Bethlehem is not where he should be born. And so you have this great king who comes from a obscure place. Even more than that, he's so great on the one hand that the heavens rip open to make a pronouncement about him. Verse 10, the heavens were being torn open before God makes this pronouncement. This, by the way, is another note that's meant to pull up a greater song from the Old Testament. The heavens being ripped open is a sign of God's action, his return, his presence, his proclamation. So Jesus is so great on the one hand that the heavens are ripped open. He's so humble on the other hand that he receives John the Baptist's baptism. And you'll remember last week, verse 8, we ended with John saying, the one who comes after me, I'm not even worthy to untie his sandals. And then immediately, the next verse, Jesus receives that baptism. And so it's highlighting for us over and over again, Jesus is the king who's greater than we can imagine. He's also the king who's more humble than we can imagine. You might think of Jesus receiving John the Baptist's baptism in this way. Some of you know, I have a sort of janky gym in my garage. And I want you to imagine

Arnold Schwarzenegger shows up to my garage, travels from California. And he comes in and he says, Matthew, I want you to teach me. I want you to teach me about lifting. I want to learn the stretching program that you're doing. However you're setting up your weekly, I want to copy the same thing.

What would I say? I'm not even worthy to hand him the chalk bag, right? Even more so, Jesus coming here to John. He is, in being the king and the redeemer, he's the humble king. He's the king who is greater and more humble than we expect. And so again, we're asking, who is Jesus? How do we respond?

How do we respond? Not just to the fact that he's the king, but also that he's the redeemer? Well, we're going to come back to the same question we had last week. If we are healed by Jesus' wounds, are you healed by Jesus' wounds? Are you willing to admit your need? I'm talking about this in generalities today because I know as we go through the gospel of Mark, we're going to see this in very specific ways. There's going to be incredibly specific applications. Are you continuing to ask Jesus to heal you? It's not enough to say or know or believe, Jesus healed me a long time ago. I don't need him anymore. No, Jesus is coming for everyone. And so it's not just that Jesus is our king.

Is Jesus also a healer no matter how long you've been a Christian? Do you know how much you need to be healed?

[ 25 : 09 ] Do you know how much you need Jesus' wounds? Are you willing to submit to this king? Are you willing to follow him?

Is he your redeemer? And as we go through this gospel, that challenge, that question is going to come up over and over again.

Of course, we know that Jesus here is beginning his ministry. This is often called his commissioning or the inauguration of his earthly ministry. And as I've pointed out many times before, I love bookends, things that repeat at the beginning of something and at the end.

We see this word for ripping, the heavens being torn open. We're going to have to wait a long time in the gospel of Mark before we see that word again. When it shows up a second time, it's going to be for the ripping of the curtain in the temple, which occurs after Jesus' death.

In other words, Jesus is able to be our redeemer because he knows the journey that this begins with one ripping will end in another. It is going to end with his death.

[ 26 : 23 ] He is going to come. He's going to pay the price and the penalty for us and our sins by dying the death that we deserve on the cross. There is one ripping here at the beginning, which points forward to another and final ripping at the end.

And so as we look at this passage, brothers and sisters, this morning, we are just clearing our throats. We are just getting a sense of who Jesus is.

We're getting the foundation, the background, the 101 of this gospel so that we can continue to understand Jesus as he goes forward in his ministry. In his autobiography, *My Share of the Task*, Stanley McChrystal talks about many points during his military career, and he shares of the time that he was at Fort Benning in Georgia.

He was in the 3rd Ranger Battalion, and he witnessed something that he never witnessed before or after. It was in the March of 1989, and they were going through an exercise, which was the change of command on Fort Benning, and while this change of command was occurring, he saw this incredible example of leadership.

There were 500 rangers standing in formation in the drizzle waiting for the ceremony to start, and rather than bringing them outside, they just let them stand outside in the rain for hours. Now, that might be unusual, but what's even more unusual is this.

[ 27 : 51 ] About 20 minutes before we were meant to start the ceremony, a single uniformed individual emerged from the building, walked across the soggy grass, and sat in one of the wet chairs facing the rangers.

It was a special operations commander, Major General Gary Luck. As the rain fell steadily, he sat there, looking at us, every ranger eye on him.

He didn't wave or call out. He didn't order us into rigid attention. He simply sat still under the same rain that fell on us. At one point, someone sent a young soldier running from the center with an umbrella that he tried to hold over luck.

But with a reassuring pat on the shoulder, the general sent the soldier away. He sat at least 100 yards from the formation, but I never saw a commander closer to soldiers than he was at that moment.

Brothers and sisters, Jesus' greatness comes not just in his power and his authority, although he has them. His greatness comes in that he is willing to sit in the rain with us.

[ 29 : 03 ] He received the baptism that was meant for us. He stood in the place of sinners. He comes to take on our sin and our suffering.

Let's pray. Our Father in heaven, we praise you and thank you again for your word. We ask again that you would challenge us that you're the king and you'd comfort us that you're the redeemer, that you would remind us that no one has ever been closer to us because you join with us in our sin and our suffering.

We ask that you would drive that deep into our hearts this morning and this week, that we would grow in our love and obedience to you. And we ask these things in the mighty name of Jesus Christ. Amen.