

Taking It Home:

- God is not silent. Often, the wilderness experiences of this life are places where God works to help us trust him more. If you are in a wilderness right now, share with your group how they can pray for you and support you. If you have been through a wilderness, recount how God used that time to strengthen your faith.

- Religiosity is blinding. For too many Jews they refused to humble themselves, confess their sin, and turn to God. How does John's pattern in Mark 1:7 and John 3:27-30 model for you an appropriate response to Jesus?

- Jesus brings order to chaos. What chaos are you experiencing in your life that you could bring to Jesus through prayer or confession? (1 Peter 5; Philippians 4; 1 John 1)

Recommended Resources:

The Land Between: Finding God in Difficult Transitions by Jeff Manion

For a restatement of Pastor Matthew's sermon points, visit pastormatthew.net and click on the "Write This Down" tab.

Church on the Edge | The Book of Mark
A Cry in the Wilderness
Mark 1: 1-8

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Bethel Church
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A Cry in the Wilderness

Notes:

For more information about Growth Groups, Growth Group homework, and a podcast of sermons with homework, visit www.bethelfc.com.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of November 4, 2012

Mark 1:1-8

Quick Review: The opening lines to the book of Mark indicate that this is the “gospel” (good news) of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Remember that Mark’s book is written to answer, “Is following Jesus worth it?!” Mark quickly introduces Jesus as both divine (Son of God) and human (Jesus the Christ). He is the one of whom the Law and Prophets spoke. During a time when the nation of Israel is experiencing 400 years of prophetic silence, John the Baptist arrives in the wilderness preaching a message to prepare God’s people for the Messiah.

My Story:

- When was the last time you felt that God was being silent?

- Have you ever been through a “wilderness” in life? What was that like for you?

Growing Deeper:

- When Mark opens the book with the “gospel” what does he mean by that term? Read Mark 1:14-15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:9-10; 14:9 for perspective. Consider also Romans 1:16.

- How does Jesus fulfill these prophecies as God’s agent?
 - Genesis 49:10
 - Psalm 2
 - Psalm 110
 - Isaiah 9:1-7
 - Isaiah 11:1-9
 - Zechariah 9:9-10

- Consider Isaiah 40:3, Exodus 23:20, and Malachi 3:1. Following Israel’s 400 years of prophetic silence what do you notice about Mark’s introduction of John the Baptist that stands out to you?

- Jews required Gentiles wanting to be admitted into Judaism to be baptized by self-immersion. In Mark 1:4 we see that John’s baptism is one with reference to forgiveness of sins. He startles the audience by having Jews be baptized expressing their true repentance from sin and desire to prepare for the Messiah. How is this different than baptism practiced by Jesus and His disciples? (See Acts 1:5; 11:15-16; Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 36:26-27; Joel 2:28-29.)