

## Baptized (Mark 1:9-13)

**9** In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. **10** As soon as he came up out of the water, he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. **11** And a voice came from heaven: “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased.” **12** Immediately the Spirit drove him into the wilderness. **13** He was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and the angels were serving him.

**(v. 9) *Jesus came from Nazareth:*** Mark followed John’s comments about the One who is greater with the statement that **Jesus came from Nazareth**. While the writer didn’t go into detail about Jesus’s life prior to this moment, we know that Jesus spent his early years in Nazareth. It was a tiny town, known primarily for the Roman army guard that was stationed there.

### Key Doctrine

#### God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. (See Mark 3:11; John 1:1-3.)

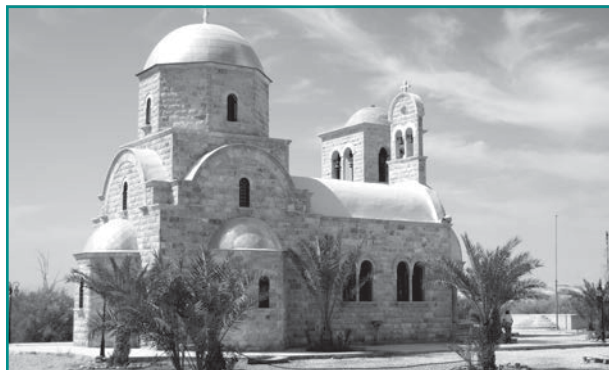
**(v. 9) *The Jordan:*** Jesus would have traveled around fifty miles from Nazareth to reach the Jordan River. While we don’t know the exact location of Jesus’s baptism, we can speculate that John would have been preaching near a crossroads people would have used. It is also interesting to note that the **Jordan** was not used for purification purposes according to the Mishnah (an early record of rabbinic traditions).

Jesus didn’t have to be **baptized** for repentance because He was completely sinless. Instead, He chose to be baptized out of obedience to the will of His Father (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 3:18).

**(v. 10) *As soon as:*** The Greek word *euthus* generally means “suddenly” or “next.” Mark used this word more than forty times in his Gospel. It emphasizes a sense of urgency throughout his Gospel.

**(v. 10) *Being torn open:*** Immediately after Jesus’s baptism, three things happened. First, the heavens opened. In Isaiah 64:1 the prophet announced that God would rend the heavens. Isaiah’s prayer was that God would come down and reside with humanity. God had answered Isaiah’s prayer through Jesus.

Next, the Holy Spirit descended **like a dove**. It is important to understand that the Spirit didn’t just rest on Jesus. He empowered everything Jesus did in His ministry and life.



The Greek Orthodox Church of John the Baptist is located at Bethany Beyond the Jordan. It marks the location where, according to tradition, Jesus was baptized.

**(v. 11) *My beloved Son:*** In Mark’s opening verse, he declared that Jesus was the Son of God. Here, he added that God was **well-pleased** with Jesus’s faithfulness. This was the first time that God had spoken audibly to His people in at least 400 years, and He left no doubt that Jesus was co-equal to Him. The presence of the Father, Son, and Spirit means each member of the Trinity participated in this event.

**(v. 12) *Drove him:*** The same **Spirit** who had just descended on Jesus now **drove** Him into the wilderness. The wording is strong here, indicating that the Spirit was insistent that Jesus go. Jesus, empowered by the Spirit, obeyed.

**(v. 13) *Forty days:*** The number appears throughout Scripture, including the accounts of Noah (Gen. 7:11-12), Israel (Num, 32:13), Moses (Ex. 24:18), and Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-8). For more details about Jesus’s temptation, see Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13.

**(v. 13) *With the wild animals:*** Mark is the only Gospel writer to mention the **wild animals**. While animals would have been common in the desert, the Greek wording suggests Jesus was not afraid of them, but that He was exerting authority over them.