

John the Baptist (Mark 1:1-18)

Read Mark 1:1-8 before showing the video.

- 1) The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2) As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:
See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;
he will prepare your way.
- 3) A voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
Prepare the way for the Lord;
make his paths straight!
- 4) John came baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5) The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. 6) John wore a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. 7) He proclaimed, "One who is more powerful than I am is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. 8) I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." (Mark 1:1-8, CSB)

1. Was there anyone else who preached that Jesus was the Messiah and Son of God before John the Baptist? What does Jesus say about John the Baptist?

- 10) This is the one about whom it is written:
See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;
he will prepare your way before you.
- 11) "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one greater than John the Baptist has appeared, but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. (Matt 11:10-11, CSB)

2. What is Jesus saying here?

- 31) "If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. 32) There is another who testifies about me, and I know that the testimony he gives about me is true. 33) You sent messengers to John, and he testified to the truth. (John 5:31-32, CSB)

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Teacher Notes

Video Abstract (Author: Wild Stories About Jesus and Max7.org): This episode of WILD STORIES ABOUT JESUS retells Mark 1.1-8, highlighting John the Baptist proclaiming that someone greater was to come after him. This video is suitable for showing in schools, kids' clubs and churches and could be helpful for family devotions.

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After reading the passage dramatically, explain to the student that the prophet Isaiah spoke of John the Baptist some 750 years earlier.

A prophet of God is someone who tells people what God has told him.

A prophecy is something God tells a prophet about the future. Only prophets of God are never wrong and never glorify themselves. Many prophets of God wrote the Bible.

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Ask the student: what chapter in the book of Mark did the account of John the Baptist begins?

Mark begins his gospel account with the introduction of John the Baptist, because there was no one before Him that publicly identified Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God.

Ask the student: how does Jesus compare John the Baptist to all human beings? How does Jesus compare John the Baptist to heavenly beings?

Among all human beings, Jesus considers John the Baptist comparatively the greatest. Among heavenly beings, Jesus considers John the Baptist comparatively the lowest. How does this impact how you serve God?

2. What is Jesus saying here?

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Ask the student: how do you evaluate what is true? Observe what Jesus said, "if I testify about myself, my testimony is not true."

Notice that Jesus' statement indicates that whatever He says about Himself, **without any objective evidence**, will not be accepted as true.

This also applies to us: whatever we say about ourselves is not true without any objective and corroborating evidence.

Ask the student: who does Jesus say speaks truly?

"There is another who testifies about me, and I know that the testimony he gives about me is true." Observe carefully that Jesus is speaking of God.

How do you know if something is true? God's word, the Bible, informs us what is true.