

Bible Journaling Notes for Lent 1: Mark 1: 9-15 Jesus' Baptism



The gospel reading for the first Sunday in Lent looks at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Mark 1: 9-15 gives us four little snapshots:

- the Baptism of Jesus (verses 9-11) [Lent](#)
- his temptation in the wilderness (verses 12-13)
- the imprisonment of John the Baptist (verse 14)
- the beginning of Jesus preaching ministry (verses 14-15).

There are no details, no embellishments, and these highly significant episodes are simply alluded to in Mark's characteristically succinct style. There are more details in other gospels.

We're going to focus on Jesus' baptism

In order to understand what it means for us we need to dig a little deeper. We need to find the human story, the sights, sounds, colours and smells of the occasion. Creative Bible journaling is a great way of exploring this. It helps us engage with God and his word at a more visceral level than the purely intellectual and engages different bits of our brain.

To explore Jesus' baptism we will need to look a little further than Mark's gospel. The following references will help us get a fuller picture:

- Matthew 3:13-4:17
- Luke 3:21-22 and 4:1-15.

Here are some suggestions for getting started with your first Bible journalling session:



- Read the gospel accounts of Jesus' baptism in Matthew and Luke. Does anything jump out at you – a single word, phrase, sensory picture or something else? Jot it down on your page.
- Then begin to imagine the scene, what colours and images come to mind? What can you smell? How hot is it? While you are thinking about this, add colours to your page – try a wash of watercolour paint or some coloured pens or pencils. Enjoy the simple physical process of applying colour. Add some images – you can tear them from magazines or leaflets, draw them yourself or keep it abstract – you know what it all symbolises for you.
- Look at the gospel reference again – is there anything to add or pray? Who are the main characters? How would you like to represent them? What does this tell us about the person of Jesus? What does it tell us about the Trinity?
- Are there any other key words you want to include? Keep adding and playing with colours and images, aware of God's presence with you. Have fun with it. You are not looking for a great piece of art or a great revelation. This is a little time of quiet. Enjoy the exploration. Our Creator God is with you as you create something on your page.
- You cannot get this 'wrong'. It's about your prayers, your exploration and your creativity. It's your journal, it is unique to you and no one is judging you!

I've found that the less you worry about what you're 'achieving' and the more you enjoy the freedom of the process of moving colours and images around your page, the more space you have for God. Maybe by the end something will have become clear to you, or maybe you will be more aware of God's presence or will feel more peaceful. If you've simply had a few happy minutes doing something creative, that's an excellent use of time! You are made in the image of God, and you have nourished some of your God-given creativity.