

## AEMMC Life Groups Dec. 5-Dec. 12



Mark 1:1-8

*1The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, 2as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:*

*“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way” —*

*3 “a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’ ”*

*4And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. 6John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.*

*7And this was his message:*

*“After me comes the one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. 8I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”*

The past and the future meet in the coming of Jesus the Messiah. He came to a people who expected him, and who had been waiting a long, long time.

### Discuss

v.3 “prepare the way of the Lord.” John prepared the way for Jesus. Preparation is a statement of faith. It's committing to trust even though you're hurting and heartsick. Mary and Joseph endured more than their share of trials as they waited for the arrival of Jesus. Mary left town. Joseph

refused to reject her on the basis of an angelic dream. But they prepared and endured it all for the sake of a greater mission than any carpenter could imagine.

v. 4 “repentance for forgiveness of sins..” Our hearts are like soil that needs to receive the seed of the Word. No good farmer just plants seed. He first prepares the soil. Is your heart prepared for Jesus? What would it take for you to be ready to receive Him? How can you work with God in being prepared?

v. 5 “confessing their sins, they were baptized.” The people were immersed not only in water, but into Christ. Are you immersed in Christ? What would it look like for you? What practices should we keep to help us live and walk in Christ? Are symbols and actions still important?

### Share Stories

v. 7 “He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” All those who have the Spirit know His presence and power. We often have an understanding of the Spirit, but we also need the experience of His presence. Share stories of God’s life working through you or through others.

### PRAY Together

Jesus did not leave us orphans (John 14-15) but is present with us by His Spirit. Invite the presence of Christ as you pray with and for one another. Pray for empowerment and for the renewing life of Christ in your lives.

Pray for neighbours who do not know Christ or His peace. Pray that the life of Jesus might be made known through you to others.

If members of the group have shared particular challenges, pray for the Lord’s presence and strength for them as they seek to persevere in faithfulness.