

# GROW Guide

January 7, 2024  
It's Time  
Mark 1:9-15

## CONNECTING QUESTIONS

Where were you baptized?

Who was there?

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Eternal God, you have placed us in a world of space and time, and through the events of our lives you bless us with your love. Grant that in the new year we may know your presence, see your love at work, and live in the light of the event that gives us joy forever - the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

## CONTEXT

It is time! The season of Advent is over, and, in this Christmas season, we celebrate Emmanuel—God with us—in Jesus Christ. Our weary world could use some rejoicing, no? We long for the Prince of Peace in our neighborhoods, homes, cities, and war-torn countries. We also long for Jesus' homemaking in our hearts. Come explore the many opportunities to grow in faith and carry on the work of Jesus Christ at Easter. So glad you are here!

From Pastor Paul Berge at [EntertheBible.org](http://EntertheBible.org):

The Gospel of Mark is about the good news (gospel) of Jesus Christ, who is identified as one from Nazareth at his baptism, recognized as God's Son by fearful demonic spirits, and proclaimed as the resurrected Lord by a young man in a white robe. In Jesus of Nazareth, crucified and risen, the reign and rule of God's kingdom has come among us.

## LOOK AT THE BOOK

- Open to Mark 1. Reread Mark 1:1; why was this verse so important?
- In verse nine, we are given some location data about Jesus? Why do each of these places matter?

- What key detail do we learn about what John does?
- In verse 10, what happens when Jesus emerges from the water? Why do you think the heavens were “torn apart”?
- The Holy Spirit is present at baptism. Why might a dove be an image used here?
- Verse 11 is a powerful reminder about our identity. Who is the voice? How do we know that?
- Three things are spoken over Jesus. What are they? Why do each matter?
- What is baptism? For Martin Luther: *Baptism is not just plain water, but it is the water included in God’s command and combined with God’s word.*
- The foundation for the “why” of baptism is found in Matthew 28:19. Look it up; what stands out to you?
- What benefits does being baptized give? For Martin Luther: *It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.*
- Why is it important that baptisms are done publicly in worship?
- Why are baptisms only done once in a lifetime?
- What does being baptized mean to you?
- What do you want to talk about that has not been brought up yet?

## TAKING IT HOME

Slowly drink a glass of water. Pause and thank God for the ways water is a gift from God. Luther encourages us to return to our baptism daily. Draw the sign of the cross on your forehead.

**May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.**