

**Note to NAPS participants:** This document is a handout for students. It presents an outline of a model paper I delivered in class to provide an example for students before their Close Reading Analysis paper was due. The Close Reading Analysis Paper Assignment is a separate document (Close Reading Analysis.pdf).

**Close reading of Mark 1:1-20**  
**Outline of paragraphs and analytical claims**  
**(YOUR PAPER SHOULD BE A PAPER; THIS IS AN OUTLINE ONLY)**

The Gospel of Mark opens with the most basic statement of who Mark believes Jesus to be: the “Son of God” and the “Christ” or messiah.... However, this passage does not claim that Jesus exists co-eternally with God the Father, nor that he is equal to God the Father.

- Comparison with John 1

Jesus does not receive the title of God’s son, and thus perhaps *is not* God’s son until his baptism. He was not *born* God’s son.

- Comparison with Luke and Matthew birth narratives
- Examination of the role of the Holy Spirit in Luke and Mark

The quotation from Isaiah in 1:2 emphasizes that the events of Jesus’ life have already been foretold in the Jewish scriptures.

- Does not foretell the messiah, however, but John the Baptist in the role of a “messenger”

After Jesus’ baptism, he is tempted by Satan. However, Jesus does not choose this path for himself. The Holy Spirit “drove” him into the wilderness.

- Examination of language (“drove”)
- Says something about Jesus as or as not the author of his own fate

Through the temptation of Satan, Mark 1 introduces a theme that recurs throughout the gospel: Jesus’ ministry as a battle against a demon-infested world.

Jesus in Mark 1 is an apocalyptic figure.

In calling his first disciples, Mark’s Jesus manifests the authoritative power of Jesus’ personal charisma.

- Examination of language and narrative: “immediately” they follow; they broach no questions

Following Mark’s Jesus requires personal sacrifice.

- They abandon work and family.
- Compare to passage in Luke 14:26
- This aspect of Jesus’ ministry and message – abandoning family – may be historically accurate, since it appears in multiple gospels in different forms.

*What I read in class was 706 words. Please note:*

- *There was very little summary – instead I focused on what the passage means*

- *There was very little quotation*
- *I haven't even discussed Fredriksen, yet.*
- *I literally worked through the passage line by line*



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