

## Monday Quotes



### Grain

“We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept.” – John F. Kennedy, 1962

### Field

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” <sup>12</sup> And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup> He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. <sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news<sup>(u)</sup> of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”  
Mark 1:9-15

### Thoughts

What I found most striking when I read the Gospel text was the roller coaster ride that Jesus experiences. The passages of Jesus’ baptism and God calling down from heaven to name Jesus as God’s beloved son are well-known. This must be a powerful day for Jesus and God’s followers; a heavenly Messiah is declared and John’s prophecy is largely fulfilled. But then, *after his baptism*, he is shoved into the wilderness by the Spirit. Jesus experiences God’s validation and then is seemingly tossed into a place often representative of danger, confusion, and temptation in biblical scripture. Jesus spends forty days tempted by Satan, surrounded by wild beasts, and wandering in a place where he probably doesn’t want to be. However, once he makes it out of the wilderness, Jesus claims his calling and begins his ministry. Right after this passage, Jesus starts recruiting his disciples and riding people of unclean spirits. Simply put, Jesus begins the work he was sent by God to do not immediately after he was baptized, but after he survives the tribulations and temptations of the wilderness.

I think about our own vocations and “calls” by God. The times we feel pulled in a certain direction, such as deciding to start a new job, going back to school, starting or growing a family, retiring, moving, or even quitting a career path and starting over. In many ways, these big changes and callings in our life mirror Jesus’s own beginnings in ministry. These life-changing decisions and monumental events usually bring a mixture of overwhelming joy and paralyzing fear. Jesus being publicly God’s beloved must have brought immense joy and the weight of expectations. The big changes we make to claim our calling may also bring struggle, hardship, and pain. We may become lost in our own wilderness, tempted to quit or doubt our abilities to succeed in a new endeavor. But its notable that the Spirit immediately drove Jesus into the wilderness before he started his ministry. It signals to us that overcoming obstacles and fighting off temptation may be part of the process of growing and claiming our own callings. It signals that adversity may not be a sign to turn back, but instead a step in the right direction. My prayer is that we all lean into the “wilderness,” whether we are following God’s call for our own lives or living out Jesus’s commandment to stand for justice and peace. Happy Monday!

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May God bless you this week,

Kyle Minden, Hunger Advocacy Fellow