Mark doesn't have any story of the birth of Jesus. We need to ask "Why?"

1. Mark is a fast paced book that focuses on <u>action</u>.

John's message:

Repent, the time is now! Your moment has come!

2. Mark contrasts Jesus as a <u>sacrificial</u> servant and reigning <u>Messiah</u>.

Mark 1:1-3

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

"John was a voice, shouting across the dreams, and perhaps the nightmares, of the Judaism of Herod and Caiaphas, the Judaism that told again and again the story of freedom but had no idea what freedom would look like when it came."

N.T. Wright (Mark for Everyone, 1-2)

"God's spirit would live with people, in people, becoming the air they breathe, the fire in their hearts. This is the promise they had lived on. John says it's now going to come true. But are they ready for it?"

N.T. Wright

3. Jesus will be measured by what he <u>does</u>, not where he comes from.

Mark 1:4-5

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

Mark 1:6

Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey.

Mark 1:7-8

And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Mark 1:9-10

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.

Mark 1:11

And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

4. Mark displays Jesus' life as a blueprint for the Christian life.

- 1. Give to worthy causes that help people experience freedom.
- 2. Invite someone to experience love and hope this Christmas.
- 3. Volunteer your time to meet people's needs.

Mark 8:27-28

And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they told him, "John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets."

Mark 8:29-30

And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ." And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

Mark 8:31

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Mark 8:32-33

And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Mark 8:34-35

And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.