

## **SPIRITUAL TASK—THE FIRST STEPS OF CHANGE** (Mark 1)

*by the Rev. David Roth at the New Church of Boulder Valley*

**Review** *Mark begins by reminding us that what he is writing is good news—The Son of God is here. John prepares the way for Jesus by baptism of repentance. Then Jesus arrives on the scene, is baptized, tempted and then begins to gather disciples and to teach, preach, heal and cast out demons. His impact is widely felt.*

**Story** This first chapter of Mark paints a broad picture of how our life can change by inviting the Lord into it. We begin by getting our external life in order—the Word will tell us how.

Making a commitment (baptism) is an important sign of our dedication to take the steps of repentance, which are to examine ourselves, recognize and acknowledge any wrongdoing in us, go to the Lord for strength to resist these, begin a new life by rejecting these whenever they arise.

Temptations and trials will follow. But as we hold to what is right with the Lord's help, the negative desires, obsessive thoughts, self-destructive tendencies will begin being cast out and deeper inner truth and good will begin to take root, and the miracle of spiritual healing will begin.

**Task** This week take a good look at your behaviors, thoughts, and intentions. Take inventory of any negative tendencies or patterns that you see. Name what it is you see. In your daily prayers ask the Lord for strength to begin to give up this one thing—one day at a time.