

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Mark1:1 ESV

Mark begins his gospel account with the above words and continues on to introduce us to John the Baptist. John was not the coming Messiah but a forerunner declaring One was coming. Mark explodes with action and stories of this one called Jesus. It is like Mark is writing on an overload of caffeine and is in a hurry to get this “good news” out. Experts believe Mark’s Gospel was the first one written and that he got his accounts from the Apostle Peter...an eye witness account.

As I re-read these opening words I kind of hovered over them for bit, trying to imagine the first reader opening the scroll and seeing these words written. Gospel is a Greek word that means “good news.” In Roman days a person might come into town and declare the “Gospel” of another battle won in the name of the emperor or that maybe the good news was that an important person was soon to come and visit their village. Mark borrows from the language of the day to bring the good news of God’s deliverance appearing. How does Mark proceed in his gospel? Jesus calls some fishermen to come and follow Him and then they go to church on the sabbath and boom! A demon cries out, Jesus shuts him and up and casts him out and the boys are off and running with the Messiah. Not too subtle...

As we begin a New Year, I have seen quite a few of them come and go. Never have been one to make resolutions or promise to myself or anyone else that I could not keep. Never really seen it as an opportunity to do better this year or become a new me...that happened fifty plus years ago in a small Baptist church when I heard the “Good News” one more time but the difference was...I believed it was Good News. The Gospel, the Good News of Jesus, changed my life in ways no New Years resolutions ever could. No promises to myself or others...a heart change happened.

And to be honest my life after saying yes to Jesus has felt much like the Gospel Mark has given us. There have been many “suddenly’s” and “at once’s” and more. (I know “once’s” is bad grammar but work with me here;) Some rocky days, many glorious times...wilderness times and mountain top times...but the Good News has always stayed the Good News. Let’s make 2023 a year of Good News...the King has come and He is coming again!

Bill