

**March 30 - The Beginning of  
the Gospel**  
[Mark 1:1-13](#)



The gospel is the story of redemption when humanity is “good-newsed” in Jesus. There

has always been a modicum of good news. When the heralds would run ahead of the army and tell their city’s populace that the king had been victorious, preparations for feasts and celebrations would begin in a hurry. Promises of stories of battles won and bravery revealed, there was anticipatory joy as people waited to see the king come through the city gates.

When Mark begins his narrative, “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God,” he lets the hearer in on a secret. The Gospel is both an event AND a person. This good news is way “good-er” than anyone has ever heard before. The king has come, but the battle was much different. Jesus was not fighting against the fleshly regents of the world (my kingdom is not of this world) but the sin-Caesars that reign within. The Gospel is that we’re saved by Jesus. No other person; no other way. This gospel revealing happens three times in the book of Mark.

Here at “the beginning of the Gospel”.

In Mark 8:29: “You are the Christ,” Peter says with help from the Spirit. It is the “middle” of the gospel.

And then in chapter 15:39 when our centurion stands below the cross and bellows, “Truly this man was the Son of God.” The “end” of the gospel.

In the midst of it all, the good news happens when Jesus encounters people encumbered with tortured bodies and souls. Along the way are strewn the demon possessed, the blind, the leprous and the paralytic. A widow mourns her lost son.

However, the demons are dispossessed, the blind man blinks with sight, the leper leaps, and the paralytic proudly carries his mat away. Jesus is both Lord of the Sabbath and Lord of souls. Every person that encounters him is changed—forever. There is no mild reaction to Jesus. No one says, “Hmm, that’s interesting.” They are amazed by his authority, shocked by his miracles, and follow him to the unspeakable space—the cross where he takes a temporary throne.

Mark starts his gospel with “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” He takes us back to Isaiah where the Messiah’s way was promised to be prepared. A messenger cries out “make straight the bent paths before the Lord.”

He’s coming for you.

This is what the Church calls “Holy Week.” We always picture it the end of Lent, but this year, it is the beginning. We see the onset of Jesus’ ministry through the finality. The cross always looms, even at the start.

John’s preparatory baptism starts the “good news.” It is a strange way to begin, I suppose, as if the floodgates from heaven from early Genesis begin to leak back on earth. But this time people will be pulled out of a Noah-like flood into a new and marvelous life. This baptism of repentance allows the hearer to see that God is doing his new thing, his promised thing, his best good thing since he said everything was “good” when he created it.

Here, when Jesus shows up, the beginning of the good news is as old as the promise in Genesis 3:15. From the seed of Eve will come forth one who will finally stomp out death forever. The beginning of the gospel IS Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is baptized in the Jordan, pulled out of the water, and sent into the wilderness for forty days to relive the history of Israel perfectly. It is done that we who are baptized into his name have it done

perfectly for us. And when he gets to the end of the gospel, when the centurion looks up at the gospel in this person, we know that a bad Friday, becomes a Good Friday.

And the Gospel is accomplished.

Truly.

**Jesus, truly Your life, death, and resurrection is Good News.  
Open our eyes to ways we can share that good news with  
someone today. Amen.**