

Finally, Some Good News!

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Good News!

- No catchy intro, no soft start, just right into it. **Mk 1:1**. That's how Mk starts, smwht abrptry; and that's how this sermon going start too – we're going just jump right into it: with the GN. I don't know re you, I'm sick hearing bad news. 2020's been filled bad news: deadly pndmc, polrzng poltcs, civil unrest, natrl disstrs – even lost host of Jeopardy – all bad news! But today, finly we have some GN; today have **vs. 1**. Phrase GN could transltd gos. We have gos, which is: GN msg that J is Sav, he loves/forges us, his life/dth/res rescue us from hell, and has home for us in hvn. That's the “GN...” And not just GN; it's best news ever! Only news that can get us through all bad news around us, and only news that gives us hope etnl life. Finally, some GN – the gos!

Mark's Gospel

- Let's start by lookng at Mk's gos. Word gos can be used as term for 1 of 4 bios of J at beg of NT. Mt, Lk, Jn all wrote gospels; so did Mk. Today we've got very beg of bio/gos Mk wrote re J. Why it says right up front, **Mk 1:1**. Mk saying: listen, I'm about tell you story of your Sav. And it's good story; this is GN! Mk was not one 12 apstl, but became a very close cwrkr w/Pt. So knew mnstry/J very well. Mk might even been 1st gos wrttn, before other 3; not sure, but posbl. And Mk (who, of course, wrote by insprtn/HS) wants his readers (primrly Gent readers, like you/me) wants us to see *power* of J: in mircls, in res, so that we can say, tog w/Gent centrn guardng cross, “**Surely this man was the Son/God**” (15:39). Mk's gos helps us see how J is “**the Messiah, the Son/God.**”

John's Gospel

- And Mk's gos also intrdcs us: Jn's gos; here I'm talking re JB. JB didn't write bio/J; but he was offcl fornnr/J; preprd ppl for comng/J. **Vs. 7**. He's talking re J; his main job: point ppl ahead to J and get them ready for J.
- JB: actly spkn of hundrds yrs before even born. OT prphts, of course, prphsd re J; also prphsd re JB. Here, **vs. 2b**. That's psg, from OT Malachi, talking re JB. Then, **vs. 3**. That's psg from OT Isa, also talking re JB; and both were wrttn hundrds yrs before Jn even born.
- Jn kind of abrsv charctr & prhps little intmdtng. **Vs. 6a** (little dffrnt), and **vs. 4**. Jn: not afraid tell ppl they sinners, desrvd punshmnt, needd repnt; fire/brmstn kind/prchr. Remem what he says in **Lk 3**. If you think in terms L&G (G being msg/salvtn; L: being msg/sin/guilt), I think we'd call JB more of a L/prchr than G/prchr. He made sure ppl knew they needed repent & change their ways. That's why so many ppl confssd their sins to him & were baptzd by him.
- However Jn also prchr/gos; shared GN too, by pointng ahead to J; was main job. Again, **vs. 7-8**. He's talkng re J! The answer to prob/sin, answer to prob/all our bad news, is always J. J is our perf & only solution. Later Jn would say: “**Look, lamb/God who takes away sin/wrld**” (Jn 1:29). J is: lamb slain on cross; and by his blood he washes away all your sins. And: promises be w/you, strngthn you thru all bad news you face in this life. Finally some GN! “**Worthy is the lamb that was slain**” (Rev 5:12), lamb who “**takes away sin/wrld.**” That's Jn's gos.

Jesus' Gospel

- Which brings us to J's gos. He = gos; he = Sav. Evthng J did, he did in love for us. He came earth, live among us. Resstd tmpttn evry/sgl day for us. Faced ridcl/suffrng/dth (nailed to cross!) for us. Came back to life in vctry over Satan for us. Ascndd back into hvn, now sittng God's right hand ruling unvrs for our good. Evthng he did & does, does in love for us. This is J's gos.

- But we will nvr apprct J's gos, unless 1st recgnz our need for it. If JB was unwrthy stoop down, untie J's sandals, think how unwrthy we! **"Make strght paths for him"?! Don't know re you, but when I look at my life/behvr, things I think re, things say/want say: my paths aren't strght at all! I hvn't follwd way/Lord; follwd own path. One of words for sin: trespass; means you've crossed line, gone where shouldn't've gone, done what shouldn't've do; you got off path. "Forgive us our trspsss."** How can I make strght paths for my Sav when my paths so crooked? Do you have crooked paths, too? I bet you do. You know you do. Jn says **"make strght paths for him,"** but our paths: crooked.
- So, J strghtns them; strghtns us out, by sending us HS. Jn: **vs. 8.** J sent his Sprt into your hrt; convrted you from unbelf to faith; turned you into Xian! Now he contnues send you his Sprt to strngthn your faith & strghtn out your life. That's what Jn means when: **vs. 8b.** J pours out his Sprt create/strngthn faith. Did it at Pent; does it today among us; and he's done it for you, in your hrt. This is J's gos.

Your Gospel

- Which therefor makes it your gos – this is what J did/does for you, persnly, as indivl. Try put self in sandals of ppl here in this reading. **Vs. 5.** 1st, confessed sins. I bet right now you can look back on your life and think smthng you've done that you're very ashmd of – a sin you cmmted that still haunts you. Do you repent that sin? Then that sin is forgvn! J forgives you, persnly, as an indivl, bec loves you. Believe that! 2nd, baptzd. Have you been baptzd? Maybe you're new to Xianity & never been baptzd. Would like be baptzd? Let's talk smtm; we can make that happen! But many you watchng this sermon have been baptzd. Some you even baptzd at this ch; I could show you record your baptsm in our big ch record bk. Baptsm: **"washing of rebrth/renwl by HS" (Titus 3:5)**, which forgvs your sins, works faith in hrt. It's your rebirth, into God's fam; makes J your bro, God your Fr. You're child of God thru baptism, membr his fam; so you have inhrtnc in hvn. Your baptsm: what defines who you are. At your baptsm, God: this one is mine; this is my daughter/son. That's who you are! This is your gos: that you're forgvn by Xp and you're baptzd into Xp. This is yours: persnly, as an indivl.

Best News Ever

- Finally, some GN! In a wrld filled w/bad news – dth, pandmc, hatred, suffrng – finally we have some GN, the gos. We have the record of Mk's gos. We have JB prchng L&G, as points ahead to J. We have J who is the gos; his life/death/res, his pouring out of Sprt – that's not just GN, it's best news ever! And it's for us; it's for you – it's your gos, your baptism, your salvtn. I know it's been hard yr. But don't let the bad news that surrounds you extinguish the GN within you. You have J, so you have evthng. That's some pretty good news!

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, ² as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way"— ³ "a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"

⁴ And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁶ John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Luke 3:7-9

"You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance... The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."