

The Good News Of Jesus – Mark 1:14-15

(Graphic – Title)

When death was arrested, stopped, halted – our lives began.

I hope you know that. I hope you're experiencing it.

And if you're not, I hope you will before you walk out of here.

If you're visiting with us, welcome to our church on this Resurrection Sunday. He is risen!

And if you're joining us via livestream, welcome to you as well.

➤ Let's start by turning in our Bibles to Mark 1:14-15 (Title Slide).

As you can see from the *heading* of this passage, it's the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Recorded by Mark. Whom historians tell us was the Apostle Peter's assistant.

And he says in v14 – *Now after John was arrested [John the Baptist], Jesus came into Galilee [northern Israel], proclaiming the gospel of God* [the good news of God].

Jesus began his ministry preaching the *gospel*, b/c it was the very reason he came in the first place. And the very thing he would fulfill and live out.

He came proclaiming the gospel, v15 – *saying, "The time is fulfilled* [the time spoken of by the prophets], *and the kingdom of God is at hand* [God's rule and reign is here, it's available]; *repent and believe in the gospel.*"

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." (15)

➤ I have one purpose today – to share the gospel with you. The good news of Jesus. B/c not only is it Easter, the ultimate *confirmation* of the gospel, but I want you to know it and embrace it *yourself*.

I want you to *know* the Good News of Jesus, and *embrace* The Good News of Jesus.

And I'm going to give you an opportunity to do that at the end.

And for those of you who have *strayed* from the gospel, *strayed* from God, I hope you'll return to him. And experience times of refreshing.

And for the rest of you, who know and *love* the gospel, I hope to bolster your faith all the more, and help you share it.

Far too many Christians are *insecure* in their faith, and feel woefully inadequate to share it. So there's something here for everyone.

Especially those who haven't embraced it themselves.

So let's start with . . .

THE PROBLEM

The gospel is *good* news, b/c there's *bad* news. A problem.

And that problem is sin. Your sin, my sin, our sin, all sin.

Sin, meaning unrighteousness. Missing the mark. Falling short of God's standard of holiness. Doing your *own* thing. Doing the wrong thing. Living *your* way.

It's sin. All of it.

And it's a problem, b/c it separates us from God, and leads to death and judgment.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. Let's start at the beginning.

• **In the beginning our relationship with God was good**

Humanity's relationship. That's where the gospel *starts*.

God made us in his image the Bible says, perfect in every way, and we had perfect *fellowship* with him. (Graphic – Landscape)

Adam and Eve walked w/ God, did life with God, and had perfect communion w/ God.

But then, they sinned. They *disobeyed* God. They defied his command. They ignored his instruction, for life. And it *broke* their relationship with him. And ours too.

The Bible tells us that their sin was passed down to *us*. So that we not only sin *ourselves*, but we're *born* with sin. A sin nature. A propensity to sin.

Separating us from God all the more.

In the beginning, through Adam and Eve, our relationship with God was good.

• **But it was broken by our sin**

Then *and now*. It was broken on our behalf by Adam and Eve, when they sinned as our representatives, and it remains broken as *we* sin. Separating us. (Graphic – Abyss)

Like it says in **Is 59:2 – Your iniquities [your sins] have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.**

Our sin and sin nature, *separate* us from God (Rom 3:23).

All of us. *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.* Short of his standard of holiness and righteousness, in order to be in his presence.

Which means our relationship is broken, and we're at odds with him. *****

Not only that, but . . .

• **And our sin leads to death and judgment**

That's the *next* consequence. *The wages of sin is death* the Bible says. Actual, physical, death. For every single one of us. (Graphic – Death)

Every single one of us is going to die.

And after that, it's too *late* to believe and embrace the gospel.

There's no second chance in all this. *It's appointed for man to die* the Bible says, and then comes the judgment. (Heb 9:27)

The judgment referred to in **Rev 20:12,15**.

The Apostle John is writing, and says . . .

[12] I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne [the throne of God at the end of time; it's a vision], *and books were opened* [books of our deeds, the things we've done].

Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done . . .

[15] And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life [regardless of what they had done, good or bad], *he was thrown into the lake of fire* [hell; the eternal place of suffering and torment].

(Graphic – Judgment)

In the beginning, our relationship with God was good. But it's been broken by sin.

And it leads to death and judgment for every single one of us. (Summary)

That's a problem. Bad news to the core.

The *good* news, is that God has given us . . .

THE SOLUTION

That . . .

- **Christ laid down his life for you**

Died for you. Submitted himself to the judgement *you* deserve.

And did so, not only b/c he *had* to in order to save us, but b/c he *wanted* to. Out of love.
By this we know love, that he [Christ] laid down his life for us (1 Jn 3:16).

Or as the Apostle Peter says it (**1 Pet 3:18**) – In addition to everything else he did,
Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous [him for us], that he might bring us to God. That he might reconcile us. Restore our relationship.

It looks like this (**Graphic – Cross**). *****

He laid down his life on the cross, as a bridge between us and God. So that we could be with God.

Do you see it? With the eyes of your heart? Christ laid down his life for you . . .

- **So that you could pass from death to life**

So that you could cross *over*. And wouldn't have to *stay* separated from him. In judgment.

It's like Jesus says in **Jn 5:24** – *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word [the gospel] and believes him who sent me, has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.*

Jesus proclaimed the gospel, so that you could pass from death to life.

B/c of what he *did* on the cross. Dying in *your* place, for your sins. *****

Talk about a solution. Talk about love.

➤ But it's *not* automatic. The Good News of Jesus doesn't automatically apply to you, just b/c you're alive. Just b/c you're hearing this. Just b/c you're in church.

Or were raised in a good home. Or do good things from time to time.

You have to confess and believe.

Christ laid down his life for you, so that you could pass from death *to* life . . .

- **If you confess your sins and believe in Jesus**

That's the 3rd part of the solution. The cross is your *bridge*, if and only if you confess your sins and believe in Jesus.

Or as he said it in Mark 1:15 – If you *repent and believe in the gospel*.

That's how you appropriate The Good News to *your* life. That's how you apply it to *yourself*. (**Graphic – Kneeling**)

You have to confess. As in admit your sin and sinfulness, and ask God to forgive you. Ask him to cleanse you. Ask him to *relieve* your guilt.

All of which he *promises* to do (**1 Jn 1:9**). *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

If you confess, he'll forgive. Not so you can feel better and go right back to sinning.

But for the purpose of *getting* right with him, and *staying* right. Living for him and abiding in him. Loving him and walking with him. Just like Adam and Eve.

No confession, no forgiveness. *****

➤ And no belief, no life. You have to believe in Jesus to the point of entrusting your *life* to him. You have to believe that he's God in the flesh.

And that he died in *your* place, for your sin. And rose again that first Easter so you could too someday. So you could have new life. You have to believe.

That's the most famous verse in the Bible. **John 3:16**.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son [Jesus], that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Should not be subject to judgment, but blessed with life to the full and life forever.

But you have to believe. You have to put your faith and trust in *Jesus*.

No confession, no forgiveness; no belief, no life. (**Summary**)

➤ Every single one of us has a problem. And every single one of us has a solution.

If, you confess your sins, and believe in Jesus. Something I'm going to help you with in a few minutes. And ask you to respond.

But first let me tell you about . . .

THE RESULT

When you repent and believe in the gospel, when you believe and embrace The Good News . . .

- **God assures you of eternal life**

Life forever. With him, in heaven. (**Graphic – Eternal Life**). Like we just saw in John 3:16. *Whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

And **1 Jn 5:12-13** assures us even more.

Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

[13] I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

When you confess and believe, Jesus actually takes up residence within you via his Spirit. Assuring you of eternal life. Right now.

That's why John wrote it. *I write these things to you who believe . . . that you may know that you have eternal life.* (13)

If you believe in Jesus, and all that he did for you, God assures you of eternal life. *****

2nd . . .

- **God assures you of his love (**Graphic – His Love**)**

Never to be withdrawn, never to be withheld, and never to be blocked (**Rom 8:38-39**).

[38] For I am sure [the Apostle Paul said] that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Nothing.

Talk about assurance. The steadfast lovingkindness of God our Savior never changes, never fails, and never wanes. Ever. *****

And neither does his presence. He'll never leave you.

- **God assures you of his presence (**Graphic – His Presence**)**

It's a promise. Repeated *throughout* the Bible. *I will never leave you or forsake you* (Heb 13:5). When we believe in Jesus and confess our sins . . .

He adopts us into his family, makes us one of his own, takes up residence within us, and never leaves. Period. No matter what.

He's there in the *good*, and he's there in the *bad*.

And there *will be* bad. Believing and embracing the gospel doesn't mean your life will be a bed of roses. In fact, Jesus said we will actually *suffer* at times.

But *never* alone. From his people around you, to his presence within you.
We're never alone. God assures us.

➤ That's the gospel. The good news that Jesus came to proclaim. (**Summary**)
And if you repent and believe in it, if you embrace it as your *own* good news, the results are yours.

But you have to choose. You have to make a decision. And no decision is a decision.
You have to choose. And I want you to see the testimony of a couple who did.
Take a look. (**God @ Work – Garth & Deanna Glenn**)