

“The Beginning of the Gospel”

Series: Jesus and His Gospel: Studies in Mark – Part 1

Mark 1:1-13

Introduction: Take your Bibles and turn to Mark chapter 1, Mark is the second book of the New Testament – the second Gospel of the four – Mark chapter 1.

On January 20th, 2009 our country observed the historic moment of our first African American President being sworn into office. A record 1.8 million people crowded the National Mall in Washington D.C. to be a part of this monumental occasion. While this landmark moment of our country’s history has proven to be a polarizing reality, at the time it was met with tears of rejoicing and shouts of glory. The spirit of America seemed to reach new heights in the hearts of many as it seemed we had crested the mountain of our past bigotry and racism and were ascending new heights of possibility and opportunity. No matter what you think of President Obama you cannot deny the epic nature of his initial inauguration. It was a day for the history books. In many ways it was a day filled with good news for our country. As a people we had seen past the color of one’s skin and had overwhelmingly elected an African American President. Now, I am certainly not saying or suggesting that if you didn’t vote for Mr. Obama that you are somehow a racist who should have voted for him simply for the sake of history. But it is fitting for us to look back on January 20th, 2009 and see that day as a day that altered our history as a nation. In some ways, it was good news for our land. Now, this is not going to be a political sermon in any way, but rather this is going to be a gospel sermon – a sermon about the good news.

The good news that many rejoiced in at President Obama’s inauguration was similar to the good news that often dominated the political happenings of the 1st Century Roman Empire. The Roman Empire was a political and social force that dominated the world of the First Century. So much so that the Emperors of the Roman Empire thought very highly of themselves and encouraged others to think of them as gods, or as a Son of God, or a Lord, or as a Savior, or Benefactor. It was often reported throughout the Empire that there was some good news, some gospel, some euangelia, that was to be spread abroad and it often centered upon the person and work of the Emperor. So on an inscription that dates to about 9BC describing the birth of Caesar Augustus it is written:

“Providence . . . has given us Augustus, whom she filled with virtue that he might benefit humanity, sending him as a savior, both for us and for our descendants, that he might end war and put all things in order . . . Caesar, by his appearance excelled our expectations and surpassed all previous benefactors, and not even leaving to posterity any hope of surpassing what he has done . . . the birthday of the god Augustus was the beginning for

the world of the good news that came by reason of him.” (Taken from *The Holman Apologetics Commentary on the Bible: The Gospels and Acts*, pg. 206)

It was clearly proclaimed in the inscription that the euangelion – the gospel – the good news – was beginning for the world with the birth of Caesar Augustus. Oh what high hopes mankind has historically placed upon political leaders and kings and emperors. Our day is no different. We are prone to look to the next election with its newfangled political products as our hope for moving the country in the right direction. We are prone to find good news – gospel – in the promises of new opportunities found on the horizon of tomorrow. Good politicians play on those hopes for a better tomorrow and sell their version of ideology to show you that those better tomorrows can be realized through their leadership.

And yet for the believers of Mark’s day, there was very little hope to be found in the Roman Empire. The best scholarship tells us that Mark wrote his account of the life of Jesus from the capital city of the Roman Empire – Rome itself – somewhere around the mid-50’s AD to the mid 60’s AD. The Emperor of Rome at that time was Nero – yes, the Nero who had a fancy for placing people on human lampposts and torching them to light the streets of Rome at night. Yes, *the* Nero who found delight in blaming the burning of Rome on the Christians so that they became the ilk of the Empire and the target for persecution. Yes, *the* Nero who would put Christians in the Arena and release wild animals to tear into their flesh in front of the raucous crowd. That Nero is in charge of Rome at the time John Mark is moved by the Spirit of God to take up his pen and write down the details of the life of Jesus of Nazareth as they were given to him by Peter the Apostle. Now you can understand why Peter’s epistles have so much to say about suffering, and why Mark’s Gospel will have so much to say about the cost of following Jesus.

Now, of all the Roman emperors who had preceded Nero, none had relished the deified state of the Emperor quite like he had. He greatly encouraged the people of the empire to address him as Lord, Savior, God, Son of God, and Benefactor. He thought himself to be the great good news for the Roman Empire. But if you were a Christian there was no good news to be found by turning your eyes to Nero. As a Christian you had become a scapegoat for tragedy and a spectacle of persecution for the entertainment hungry capital city. To be a Christian meant that there was no good news to be found in the Roman Empire itself.

How vital and instructive is it then that Mark’s Gospel begins with these words – “The beginning of the gospel – the euangelion – the good news – of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” Mark is the only one of the four accounts of Jesus’ life in Scripture to actually call itself a Gospel. This does not mean that the other three are not filled with the good news about Jesus, but it draws attention to the fact that Mark had a special eye towards making this good news known. And we can see why considering that he was writing primarily to Gentile Christians living in Rome during a time where being a follower of Christ was a ticket to persecution and a possible signature of your own death certificate. Onto that scene bursts these glorious words – the

beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God! These words stand as the glorious title to the whole book of Mark. The whole thing is about this Gospel which is found in this Jesus Christ, the Son of God. There is not a word or phrase or thought in Mark's Gospel that is not intent on expositing this glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. These words also stand as the specific title for these first 13 verses. Mark is intent on not wasting words and getting right to the point of letting his readers know how this gospel of Jesus Christ began. The appearance of Jesus on this world, the start of his ministry, the tearing of the Heavens by God the Father to confirm that Jesus was indeed His true Son, the testing of this true Son in the wilderness – all of this is the beginning of the good news for mankind. The beginning of this good news is not be found in a presidential inauguration, or the birth of an emperor, or the ascension of a king. The beginning of this good news is to be found in only one person – Jesus Christ, the Son of God! And Mark makes that clear by using the singular word for gospel. Often when there was a word of good news to be pronounced in the Roman Empire the plural form of gospel would be used, but here Mark makes it known that this is the singular good news. Good news is to be found in one place, explicitly in one person – Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Let's read verses 2-13 to read of the beginning of this gospel – this good news. *Read 1:2-13.*

So we see in these first 13 verses of Mark's account of the life of Jesus that the beginning of the Gospel is proclaimed by John, revealed in Jesus, and tested in the wilderness.

The Beginning of the Gospel is:

1. Proclaimed by John – vs. 2-8

- a. This good news that Mark is intent on telling us about is a good news that was proclaimed by John in the wilderness. Verses 2-8 detail in short account the ministry of John the Baptist. All four Gospels have some detail about John the Baptist's ministry to prepare the way for the Lord. Mark's account contains less detail than the other three, but remember that he has a specific task – he is seeking to proclaim the beginning of the Gospel and he is on the fast track to get to the Good News as it is seen and known in the life of Jesus.
- b. In verse 2 he transitions abruptly from the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God to quoting some OT passages about the ministry of the forerunner. Then in verse 4 he makes clear that those verses found their fulfillment in the ministry of John the Baptist. And then he describes for us the details of this ministry of John along with the overwhelming response to John's message by the Jewish people. He then describes John's lifestyle and then turns to some of John's teaching about the Lord whose way he is preparing.
- c. In considering the ministry of John the Baptist we must remember the absence of an authoritative word from the Lord since the ministry of Malachi some 300-400 years earlier. The God of Heaven who had made covenant with the Jewish People simply had not revealed himself to them for hundreds of years and there was great expectation that the Great Prophet was soon to arrive. The thumb of the Roman

Empire along with the corruption of the leaders of Judea made the general populace long for God's soon intervention. And this intervention begins with a man dressed like a prophet from of old – in camel's hair clothes and with a belt of leather keeping it all together. He lived in the wilderness and ate locusts and wild honey. He was set apart from the normal life of the Jew and God had anointed his lips with an important message for His people. The message of John was simply that God is about to send His Messiah. God is about to break into human history once again and the Jewish people must be ready. They must repent of their sins and be forgiven. They must be baptized so as to publicly display their repentant heart and the cleansing of their sins. This was John's message to his people and it was this message that prepared the way for the Good News to come. In other words, John's appearance as a prophet of God when there had been no voice for so long created an eschatological crisis for the people as seen by their vast response to his message. They wanted to hear from God and He finally spoke through John the Baptist and they responded. They understood that this man had been sent from God and they believed that his message was true – the Messiah was soon to come.

- d. Notice from the text that Mark's explanation of John begins with a quote from the Old Testament. This quote that is attributed to Isaiah actually comes from three different texts – Malachi 3, Exodus 23, and Isaiah 40. Because the Isaiah passage has much the same words as the Malachi 3 and Exodus 23 passage Mark did not think it necessary to attribute these words to all three texts, and this was a very common thing to do in the Ancient writings. What these quotes make known to us is that Jesus is not some afterthought in the plan of God only to be employed if all other things don't work out. No, God has been planning and working in His redemption of man to lead up to this moment of Jesus bursting on the scene of human history as the good news. Jesus is not the next in a series of God's attempt to bring salvation, but rather he is the culmination of God's work. He is the Gospel – the good news. These Old Testament quotes make that connection clear by linking the appearance of Jesus with the ministry of John the Baptist – the final prophet before the one Great Prophet. What this means is that Jesus' ministry is not understandable to us unless we see him as the culmination of the Old Testament work of God. And John the Baptist is the last of these Old Testament works that must be done in order to prepare the way for the Gospel – there has to be one crying in the wilderness calling the nation to make themselves ready for the coming of the Lord.
- e. Now to be clear, John's message was not a soul-saving message, but a readiness message. So his calling people to come to the Jordan to be baptized was not a call for people to be saved eternally from their sins, but rather to recognize that the day of the Lord was at hand. The Messiah was about to come and they needed to be prepared. It was time to get serious about sin and righteousness. It was time to

ready their hearts and their souls for the work that God was about to do. And so his baptism was not a baptism of regeneration as though somehow the water cleansed the baptized of their sins, but rather it was a baptism of identification. It was a public act by which one made clear that they agreed with John's message and they desired to have a ready heart for the coming Messiah. It was an act in which one made known that they longed for this Messiah to come – they wanted and needed the good news!

- f. And John foreshadows this good news by telling them that the one to follow him is mightier than he is. So much so that he is not even worthy to loose the strap of his sandal. This was a job that was reserved for the lowest of the low – the Gentile slave. Not even the Hebrew slave was made to do this, and John says that he is not even worthy of that job for the mighty one who is to come after him. This might of the one to come after John will also be seen in the kind of Baptism he administers. John has administered a baptism of water which has been a real baptism with symbolic meaning. There has been no real power or change in this baptism – simply a symbol that is seen by all when one is baptized. But the one coming after John will baptize them with the Holy Spirit. In other words, the symbol of John's water baptism done in anticipation of the ministry of the Messiah will give way to the true baptism of the Holy Spirit through the ministry of the Messiah. In this way, Jesus is mightier than John. John was not the Gospel, but he was the forerunner who made the way ready for the Gospel. He was the beginning of the Gospel's beginning. And then, just as quickly as John has broken on the scene in Mark 1, now Jesus of Nazareth does the same.
2. Revealed in Jesus – vs. 9-11
- a. This Gospel that was proclaimed by John is about to be revealed in Jesus in verses 9-11. In those days of John's work of proclaiming the coming good news, the good news himself comes to John to be baptized by John. Through the events of Jesus' Baptism we are going to learn from Mark that this Jesus of Nazareth is the Gospel – He is the one who is the good news. But notice how the good news of Jesus Christ comes at the strategically appointed moment. There was a God-ordained moment for the good news of Jesus Christ to come to Earth, break into mankind's existence and begin the work of redemption. But that appointed time was after the way had been prepared through the ministry of John the Baptist. There was a sequence of how things had to go and there was a plan that had to be followed, and in Mark 1 we see that plan carefully detailed.
 - b. And now Jesus comes to be baptized by John the Baptizer. Certainly Jesus does not have any sin for which he needs to be cleansed. Certainly he does not really even need to identify himself with the message of repentance that John is preaching for Jesus has nothing of which to repent. In fact this is exactly how Jesus is presented in the late Apocryphal writings. In the Apocryphal Gospel called the Gospel of the Nazarenes Jesus was "told by his brothers that John was

baptizing people ‘for the forgiveness of sins,’” and so Jesus asks them, “‘In what way have I sinned that I should go and be baptized by him?’”¹

- c. Apart from the revelation of the Scriptures we would presume that this is how the perfect and sinless son would react to John’s baptism. But the Spirit inspired Scriptures make it clear that Jesus came in all humility and placed himself under the authority of John and was baptized in the Jordan River. He does this as a way to identify himself with the message of John as well as to provide continuity between the ministries of John and the impending ministry of Jesus. Jesus is making known by this act of humble submission to John that he is human and he is identifying himself with John’s message to the human race, and as he says in Matthew he is fulfilling all righteousness as the sinless Son of God. And this baptism of Jesus no insignificant act. The early church viewed the ministry of Jesus as starting with his baptism by John. So in Acts 1 the apostles are talking about finding a replacement for Judas and we read in verses 21-22 of one of the main qualifications of anyone who is to take this spot.
 - i. ²¹ So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us-- one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection." (Acts 1:21-22 ESV)
- d. They obviously considered the ministry of Jesus to have started upon this occasion of his baptism by John. This is a significant event in the life of Christ. However, it is hard to know from the text if those who were present at the Jordan River when Jesus was baptized understood the significance of the event or not. Nothing in the text tells us if they heard the voice of God declaring the Sonship of Jesus, and there is no detail here about their reaction to this event, but certainly by the time of His Ascension Jesus had made clear to his disciples how important this event of His baptism was. And so here Mark makes known to his Gentile readers that the beginning of the Gospel was revealed in Jesus through his baptism by John.
- e. Mark makes it clear that this event was significant by recording for us what happened as Jesus was coming up out of the waters of the Jordan. He tells us that Jesus saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” This baptism of Jesus by John set in motion the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Son will be the central person of the Godhead who will carry out this redemptive work on the pages of human history. But it is a Triune work as we see here in the text. Both the Spirit and the Father give public witness to their approval of the Son and His impending work. This is not the moment of which Jesus receives his divine sonship. In other words, it is not here in the life of

¹ As quoted in *The Holman Apologetics Commentary on the Bible: The Gospels and Acts*, pg. 210.

Jesus that he becomes the Son of God. He is eternally the Son of God. Rather this moment makes known the “cosmic significance” of who Jesus was and what he was about to do.² The Triune God is testifying at the outset of Jesus’ ministry of redemption to publicly make known that all of this has universal significance.

- f. Of particular interest is this word for the heavens being torn open. This is what Isaiah cried for in 64:1 where his longing for God’s intervention reached seemingly unbearable heights and he says:
 - i. Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence-- (Isaiah 64:1 ESV)
- g. This is what happens here in Mark 1. The Godhead breaks into the existence of mankind, tears open the Heavens and declares that this Jesus of Nazareth is the Beloved Son with whom God the Father is well pleased. This word for tearing open is a much more dramatic word than simply opening up the heavens. This was not a gentle event. It is the same word that is used towards the end of Mark’s Gospel where he tells us this in chapter 15
 - i. ³⁷ And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. ³⁸ And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. (Mar 15:37-38 ESV)
- h. This was not a gentle opening up of the curtain in the Temple. This was a sudden and severe tearing that clearly communicated the access to God that had just been won through the blood of Jesus. Both of these tearings in the Gospel of Mark are mighty and powerful acts of divine intervention into the existence of mankind. Mark intentionally does not use this word in any other place in his gospel other than here in chapter 1 and again in chapter 15. So the Gospel begins with God tearing open the Heavens and at the end the curtain is torn in two. The first is God intervening into the course of human history to make known the unique character of His Son and the second is God tearing down the barrier because this unique Son has accomplished His work of redemption. And so you can see the unique significance of this event in the mind of Mark. He is making it clear by his word choice that this tearing open of the Heavens signifies the beginning of the Gospel as it is known and understood in Jesus Christ. And this Gospel will have another tearing open near the end of the work of Jesus on Earth which is also tremendously significant.
- i. But the Heavens are not just torn open, there is also the voice of God which proclaims words of affirmation upon Jesus. Now again, we don’t know if anyone around Jesus heard these words or not, but the fact is Mark knows that these words were spoken and they were passed on by Jesus to his apostles and now through Peter they are passed on to Mark and now to the Gentile believers in Rome. These words are significant as well. God the Father identifies Jesus as His Beloved Son with whom he is well pleased. This is a conglomeration again of two

² *The Gospel of Mark*, William Lane, NICNT, pg. 58.

Old Testament texts. The first part of it is taken from Psalm 2 where the immediate reference is to the current King of Israel. This was the title given to the King of Israel – he was called a son by God. But the problem with all other kings who had come before Jesus was that they were not well pleasing to the Lord. They were not sinless and obedient and righteous. Rather, each one of them failed to be the perfect and righteous king that Israel needed. But now, here is the Son, who at the beginning of his ministry is identified as the Son with whom the Father is well pleased. The second part of the verse is most likely taken from Isaiah 42:1 in which Yahweh is prophesying of the Servant that is his chosen one. It is this servant that Yahweh delights in and with whom He is well pleased. And so in Mark we come to know that this Servant is the same person as this Son and this Son is Jesus!

- j. How comforting and life altering this idea must have been to these Roman Christians! They lived under the daily rule of a human emperor who desired for all to call him the son of God. He wanted all to think that he was the one who was good news for the Roman Empire. And yet, the truth is, Nero is not the Son of God, and therefore he is not the gospel either. Mark has made it clear from the very first verse – Jesus is The Son of God – and here in verse 11 God the Father Himself makes that clear by tearing through the Heavens and proclaiming Jesus to be his beloved Son. Nero was not the Son of God – Jesus of Nazareth is – and this is the beginning point of His Gospel. It is sourced in a person. You see, the gospel of Jesus Christ is not essentially about facts or about truths or about doctrines – but rather these core facts and truths and doctrines flow from the reality of the person of Jesus of Nazareth who was the sinless Son of God. For if the gospel were simply some facts or some truths then God could have simply torn open Heaven and written these facts down on tablets of stone like he had done before. But the core essential of the Gospel is Jesus. He is the Gospel. He is the good news. And it will be Mark's intent in this book to make this person, Jesus Christ known to us. And so the heavens are torn apart and the Spirit descends upon him like a dove and the voice of the Father makes known the unique character of his beloved Son. The Gospel is revealed in Jesus.

3. Tested in the Wilderness – vs. 12-13

- a. And after this dramatic intrusion into human history by the Triune God the text tells us that the Spirit drove Jesus further into the wilderness. They were already in the Judean wilderness at the Jordan River, but the Spirit compelled Jesus to go further into the isolation of the Judean wilderness. And in this isolation he is met with the testing of temptation from Satan himself. There is significance in the Beloved Son being driven into the wilderness for forty days. It was in the wilderness that Israel as a nation ratified their covenant with God to become His sons and daughters – to become His people. It was also in the wilderness that they were delivered by God out of bondage and were brought over into the

Promised Land, but it was also in the wilderness where they violated the terms of their covenant – the Law of God – and thereby required the work of God’s redemption on their behalf. And so, where Israel failed to obey and thereby made clear their need of redemption, the Son is now driven by the Spirit to go.

- b. The text says that Jesus was immediately driven out into the wilderness by the Spirit. This driving out is the same Greek word used frequently in Mark for the driving out of demons by the powerful words of Jesus. So, this is a word that we will come across often in our study of this book. But in Mark’s usage of it here it is not as though Jesus is resisting the Spirit and must be driven, but rather it is that Jesus must keep this Divine appointment in the wilderness. It was here that His human will would be preeminently put to the test. He has just been declared to be the beloved Son, and now he is put to the test as to what kind of Son would he be? You see Jesus of Nazareth was not some divine robot who simply did what the Triune computer chip told him to do. Rather, he was fully man and he had a human will. He had to make choices, and so this must be proven. It must be made known that Jesus was indeed fully man with a fully functioning human will and the only way to put this on display is to put him in the most intense of human conditions and present him with the evil alternative posed by God’s adversary. And so in the wilderness with 40 days of fasting and living with the wild beasts he is confronted with the best alternative to obedience and faithfulness that the adversary of God can offer. And he passed the test by remaining obedient to the will of the Father.
- c. You see, his public ministry as the preeminent proclaimer of the gospel of the Kingdom could not commence until this question was settled – what kind of Son would he be? Would he be like all the rest, or would he be the one True Son with whom the Father is well pleased? Because he proved himself to be the one true and obedient and faithful Son, the work of the redemption of mankind can now commence. The beginning of this Gospel is presented by Mark as being proclaimed by John, revealed in Jesus, and tested in the wilderness.
- d. There is no doubt at the end of verse 13 that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God who is the fulfillment of the Old Testament plans and prophecies. There is no doubt that he is the One for whom the way has been prepared by the last Old Testament prophet – John the Baptist. There is no doubt that he is fully man who humbled himself in the baptism of John to fulfill all righteousness. There is no doubt that God the Father is fully pleased with this His One True Son. There is no doubt that he is anointed with and led by the Spirit of God. There is no doubt that He has been tested and tried and proven himself faithful through forty days in the wilderness rejecting the wicked ways of Satan. This is the beginning of the Gospel – this is Jesus – the Son of God, proclaimed by John, the revealer of the gospel, and tested in the wilderness.

Conclusion: And so as we close the question now rests upon our hearts – how does this matter? How did these opening words change and shape the Roman Christians as they first heard these words? How should they change and shape us?

- Reject False Gospels
 - We must first of all recognize that following after Jesus Christ and being His disciple means that we will necessarily reject all false gospels. And by this I don't simply mean the false gospels that tinker with Jesus and shape him into their own desires and liking. I mean also the many promises of good news that offer hope for tomorrow. I mean the empty promise of the politician, the false hope of a new job, the vain prospect of some new possession. Those all hold some good news – and I certainly don't mean that we shouldn't rejoice in the good gifts that the Lord gives us – but I am saying that we must not stake our eternal joy and our eternal salvation upon them. We must not order and direct our lives around these false gospels for their good news does not last.
 - Now you might say – well, I am certainly not trusting in anything other than Jesus for my eternal life. But are you seeking life for today in something other than Jesus? Are you basing your joy and your hope and your trust in something other than Jesus – some other good news for today that you think holds the prospect of great things? We must reject our heart's tendency to run to other gospels – even as believers. So, what other gospels is your heart prone to run to for joy and hope and good news?
- Cling to the One True Gospel
 - The flip side of this same coin is that you must cling to the one true gospel. And this one true Gospel is Jesus Himself. Rather than claiming Jesus as your get out of Hell free card and then moving on to things you can see and taste and touch to bring you joy and hope in the moment – you must cling to this one true gospel at all times. There is no good news for the Christian in this life apart from Jesus. All good news is wrapped up in our relationship with Him. Life is found in Jesus Christ – He is the Gospel – and so we must cling to Him!
 - Not only is this true in our personal lives, but this may also be true in our proclamations of the Gospel to others. Have you lost sight of the fact that your witness of the Gospel is not about facts or truths, but it is about a person? It is not about what people can gain or about how much better off a person will be – it is about a person – Jesus Christ. We must cling to him as we proclaim the Gospel, for He alone is the one true Gospel.
- See the way of Discipleship
 - And lastly, we must see the way of discipleship as it is laid out in Jesus Christ. Following the way that Jesus pioneers is going to be a major theme in the book of Mark. And so what do we see about this way that Jesus pioneers for us in these first 13 verses? Well, we see that our story of redemption links up with God's overall plan to save mankind. We see that baptism is followed by great testing in

which we can be assured of the ministry of angels. The text says that Jesus was with the wild beasts in the wilderness. I think this is an intentional link by Mark to the life of the believers in Rome. They had seen their brothers and sisters in the Lord be placed in the arena and be torn apart by wild animals. Jesus too knew the threat of wild animals, and especially the threat of His greatest enemy. He went toe to toe with Satan and He won. If you choose to follow Jesus Christ in this life you will become the enemy of Satan and he will seek to destroy you. But you will be in good company, for Jesus himself has been in those shoes, and he has won the victory on our behalf. See in this the way of discipleship. There is no promise of health and wealth and prosperity simply by naming and claiming the blessings of Jesus. That is a false gospel. The true gospel is this Jesus who was violently tested as the True Son of God. So child of God – you too can expect to be tested in the wilderness. You can expect to face the wild beasts of life. But you can do this based upon the power of the Son of God who has already been there and done that and won the victory for you. Let's pray!

As we bow our heads to pray maybe there is someone here today who has never put their faith and their trust in this Jesus alone. As you have been confronted with the true Son of God the Spirit of God has been ministering to your soul calling you to put your faith in Jesus. Friend – may today be the day of your salvation. Don't delay any longer. You can simply call upon the name of the Lord right now and be saved. If you have done this the Bible says that belief in the heart will come out through confession with the mouth. So you need to tell someone of your decision to place your faith in Christ. Or maybe you need help understanding what saving faith means. Don't leave today until you know. Ask the friend who invited you, or your parents who know the Lord, or find me after the service. Allow one of us to show you the good news of Jesus Christ.