

Week of March 4-10

IT REALLY IS GOOD NEWS!

Scripture Reading: Read Luke chapter 4

It seems like every day you can't pick up a newspaper or turn on the television without bad news hitting you in the face. As I write this, folks in the Midwest are trying to piece their lives back together following devastating tornadoes, families are trying to make sense of another school shooting in Ohio, the economy continues to limp along as gas prices creep (or leap) ever higher and American soldiers are dying on the other side of the world at the hands of terrorists.

But there is good news and it's not simply that someone saved money by switching to a different insurance agency! According to today's chapter reading, Jesus came to preach good news under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, for some believers, the gospel is not good news. Sometimes, folks have strongholds in their lives that keep them from seeing the gospel as good news. As a result, they have difficulty seeing past their sins to see his grace. Perhaps they received bad teaching, or had poor role models or suffered trauma. For whatever reason, the "good news" is missed.

Today's reading, however, makes it clear that the gospel is intended to be good news. God has not left us in our sin. He sent Jesus Christ to this earth, to offer his life on the cross, to save us from eternal separation from God. He came to bring hope, healing and wholeness to broken, battered and bruised lives. The healing Christ brings touches the entirety of our broken existence: spiritual, emotional, physical, mental, and relational. Jesus came to put the world's curse in reverse by restoring spiritual life to spiritually dead people, by promising resurrected bodies to bodies subject to decay and then proving it by his own resurrection, and, then, predicting a new heavens and a new earth to come at the end of time. Now, that really is good news!

Action Step and Prayer Focus: Spend some time today reflecting on both your understanding and experience of God's grace. Are there any hindrances you see that keep you from truly entering into God's grace and seeing the gospel as good news? Ask God to tear any strongholds down, to heal any wounded places and to give your soul a "grace awakening."

Take-a-way: The gospel...it really is GOOD NEWS!