

PARTNERSHIP IN THE GOSPEL

MARK 1:1-8 (NRSV)

WILDERNESS OPPORTUNITY

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

² *As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,*

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way;

³ *the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:*

‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’ ”

⁴ *John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”*

1. Without God we are in a wilderness where ‘good news’ seems **HOLLOW**.

2. The steadfast voice in the wilderness is the voice of **HOPE**.

...the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

Matthew 4:16 (NIV)

- The voice is God's **ANSWER** to those of us who see no way out of the wilderness and for those of us who get comfortable in the wilderness.
- The voice is an **AUTHENTIC** word from God.
- The voice proclaims that God is **APPROACHING** us in Christ.

3. Ultimately, our wilderness is changed because we are changed by the **HOLY SPIRIT!**

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

Ephesians 3:16-17 (NIV)