



From Our Vicar

Rev. Wayne Walters

The Power of the Cross—Jesus' Destiny, Our Deliverance. Mark 1:9-15

For the start of Lent, we dive into Mark's gospel, which is so action packed. In seven short verses Jesus is baptised, filled with the Spirit, sent into the wilderness where for 40 days he faced severe testing and hunger; John the Baptist gets put in prison and Jesus commences his preaching ministry.

Mark's driving summary is dramatic and doesn't flinch from the hardships and battles into which the messengers of God are immediately thrust. How could we possibly read scripture and expect life as a disciple of Jesus to follow a calm and reliable path? However, we also see the affirmation, the constant care, and the equipping of the Father through the Spirit.

Those indwelt by the Spirit belong to the Kingdom of Light, and the kingdom of darkness does not readily release its hold. Yet it must in the face of Jesus who has given us authority in his name over all the powers of darkness. That includes the darkness that dwells in us - both from what has been done to us and what we have done or neglected to do ourselves.

Shame from either source can be our undoing and steal our joy and confidence. Jesus' good news reaches even to such secret places in each of our lives. He took our guilt, our shame, our unworthiness, our self-rejection, and unbelief all upon himself on the cross.

'He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds, you have been healed.' 1 Peter 2:24.

This truth can take a long time to seep deeply into our spirit.

Don't be surprised or be trapped by hardship, hurts and disappointments in God, yourself or others. In all things keep fixing your eyes and heart on Jesus, not on yourself. Trust him who endured the cross for you and me, for our healing and ultimate deliverance and joy.

And do so prayerfully in the company of God's people who are given to us as Jesus' loving embrace and counsel. Together and in his name and love we become wounded healers for a hurting world.

Wayne