**Intro**: I read an article last week about Christmas in Japan.

 In the last few decades widely celebrated; not religious.

 Presents, Lights, Cards, Parties… Romantic Night… No Jesus.

* We have given them Christmas without Christ.
* We have Christmas without Christ.

**t/s** – Christmas is not cultural; Theological… Christological

 Answer the Question, “What Child Is This?”

**Mark 1:1** READ Jesus, Christ, Son of God.

***The Beginning of the Gospel***… euangelion = Good News!

Christmas Proclaims the Gospel.

**ILL** – Gabriel to Zachariah –

“I have been sent to bring you this ***Good News***!”

***ILL*** – Angel to Shepherds – “Do not be afraid for behold, I bring you

 ***Good News*** of great joy which will be for all the people.”

Mark begins his story of Jesus by declaring, “Good News!”

(Gospel used 7 times by Mark… more than any other)

Noel = not sure what it means… something about birth of Jesus

**Gospel** = Joy. God’s Work. Radical New Order/Status

Rejoice! God is making things New, Setting things Right.

**Rejoice**

**Exp** – The word Gospel carries with it a note of Joy!

 Euangellion = ***Joyful Tidings***!

Joy to the World! Good new of Great Joy!

**ILL** – Hobbs, If the Word Gospel was turned into a Newspaper

 Headline, “Something Wonderful Has Happened!”

**App** – Not Joy in Family, Gifts, Creating Hallmark moments….

 The Joy of Christmas is the Joy of the Gospel!

**Rejoice in the Work that God Has Done.**

**Exp** – Gospel is a word that declares the work that God has done;

 Not the work that we must do.

 **Isaiah 40: 3-5, 9-11** == ***Good News*** (vs. 9 2X)

 “Go Tell It on the Mountain” --- this text!

 Old Theological Dictionary (five volumes) Hebrew Word

***The Public announcement of something Wrought by God***.

 “Wrought” = Work… archaic past tense

**ILL** – We have made Christmas something we DO.

 Decorate, buy gifts, prepare meals, gather family….

**App** – Many of You have made the Gospel something you Do!

 Take the Joy out of the Gospel.

 **John 3:16 – Gospel** (take your time)

**Making All Things New**. (Setting things Right)

**Exp** – *The* ***Beginning*** *of the Gospel* = Creation Language (Gen. 1)

 Romans, ***evangel*** = an historical event connected to the Emperor that bring *a radically new state of affairs*.

**ILL** – Board Games at Christmas… Risk… Game of Global Domination

 Take countries and continents… squeeze others off map!

* Losing; weak, squeezed off map… New Game!
* Winner; Power and Place; Status… Status Quo!

**App** – Christmas is not Good News for people who **prefer Status Quo**.

 Not Herod, not Innkeeper, not rich young ruler, not Priests,

 Not Pilate, not anyone who had “IT” made.

 Foolishness and weakness to everyone except the people who know they need Saving!

Good News of the New Work of God. He is setting the World right by setting us right.

So many Christmas songs sung in a minor key… Longing, dissatisfaction, searching, seeking, yearning… O Come…

… empty, oppressed, guilty, defeated.

Rejoice! God is making things New, Setting things Right.

**Conclusion**: Mark 1: 14-15

Jesus came proclaiming the Gospel of His Rule as King.

 Repent (no status quo)

Believe (Trust God’s New Work)

Receive the Gospel and Celebrate Christmas the same way:

 Repent, Believe and Rejoice!