
Sermon
on Mark 1:4–11 | “Becoming the People of God”
”And There Was Morning”

∴ ZERO ∴

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

*“Grace to you and PEACE from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

1 Co 1:3. (NRSV)

∴ Amen.

∴ ONE ∴

AND THERE WAS MORNING...

Mornings, I find them a wonderful time of the day—mostly.

You wake up and there are so many options before you. So much is possible, so much can be achieved.

At least that's how I feel when I get up. Motivation, zeal—these are greatest in the morning.

Morning can also be very different.

You wake up, maybe you didn't even really sleep—because something lies heavy on your heart.

You might have been wide awake during the night, or you might have had restless sleep.

But now morning has come—and you cannot avoid the thing that has you firmly in its grip.

Mornings, they are a beginning of something...
maybe a hope,
 maybe a fear,
 maybe another meaninglessness.

::: TWO :::

AND THERE WAS MORNING...

We have heard the words from Genesis 1:

*And there was evening and there was morning,
the first day.*

Genesis 1:5b (NRSV)

Understanding that the creation of earth was not a one day event but a long time becoming is fascinating.

But it does not give you a real idea of a beginning.

The creation narrative gives us a clear image, something we can grasp, understand.

It tells us of a day one.

It tells us that God,

the creator initiated everything.

It tells us that becoming does not equal

somehow drifting into existence.

Creation is an act that the creator initiated.

Unfolding and creating are no contradictions.

Genesis tells so wonderfully the story of how things came into being—so that we can understand creation.

What a wonderful idea, what a wonderful thought, a first morning...

The morning of the day when God brought order to chaos,

When God created space for life, when he spoke his word, and things became.

What a wonderful idea, what a wonderful thought, a first morning...

...when all options are given, a start, a beginning, ...

... a first morning from which all being could unfold, ... a morning of first light.

::: THREE :::

AND THERE WAS MORNING...

There was this morning at the river Jordan, when John the Baptizer stood in the water, baptizing people for forgiveness of their sin.

Baptizing with water, this wonderful element, this dangerous, this life giving and life taking element.

John spoke of someone after him:

"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.

I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Mark 1:7-8 (NRSV)

That very morning, suddenly he is there. Not a proclamation anymore. He's there for real.

He is the one because words from heaven, creator's words say:

*"You are my Son, the Beloved;
with you I am well pleased.*

Mark 1:11 (NRSV)

A new creation is on its way. New life is brought to creation. And Jesus, the Son of God, the Beloved is the very first bearer of the new life.

And not any kind of life. A life that shows in its being, in its mission, that creation is an act of love, ...

and that love is the power that stands against all evil and will not be overpowered—no matter how strong the evil forces, no matter how high the waters of chaos may rise.

∴ **FOUR** ∴

AND THERE WAS MORNING...

Another unprecedented morning:

“Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, [Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome] were on their way to [Jesus’] tomb and they asked each other, “Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?”

But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.

As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

“Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here.”

Mark 16:2–6a

What started right on this special morning at river Jordan came to a conclusion on this special morning at Jesus’ empty tomb.

The life-taking forces were overcome, the life-giving creational power of God has prevailed.

And up to today and for all coming future baptism is the experience of being drowned in the life-taking water but rising through Christ, so water becomes the life-giving power to eternal life.

::: FIVE :::

AND THERE WAS MORNING...

Mornings can be all so different.

Some easy, with the sun in your face and your heart—like the night has been a bath in the refreshing waters of life.

But mornings can also be the time when the rising light only starts to dimly illuminate the chaos waters that threaten to forcefully draw you under.

Mornings can be just the next episode in an on-going fight for life, *maybe* a better life.

Mornings can be just another waymark in an ongoing struggle—when you actually rather wished there would be no more mornings at all.

∴ SIX ∴

AND THERE WAS MORNING...

Again... If there just wasn't. But there is, another one.

What if we, on these mornings, remembered that God created a first morning, when everything was new and everything was possible?

What if we remembered that there was this morning when God proclaimed that his Son had come to bring new life?

What if we remembered that there was this morning when everything seemed over, the power of love overpowered...

... but then the stone was found rolled away from the Jesus' tomb.

What if we remembered that this morning is also your new morning of life.

::: SEVEN :::

AND THERE WAS MORNING...

No, things, fears, thoughts, weights, ... might not just disappear, not just be vaporized.

But it might make a difference to sit down in the morning, not doing the hugest spiritual exercise,

... just being there and remember that God, the loving creator, the saving Son, the life-giving Spirit is there, with you, around you, within you.

And it is his will that your morning is the morning providing you with all power you need, all hope you need, all options to escape the chaos waters of fear and despair, ...

...it is his will that each morning is the start to discovering his love in your life again, leading you on a path of compassion, forgiveness, justice, and peace.

What if we meant exactly that when we wish each other a 'GOOD MORNING'...

And so, I say, dear sisters and brothers, I wish
you a GOOD MORNING!

::: AMEN.