Sermon: **I know who you are** (Mark 1.24)

The New Year is important for many – a time for reflection and promise. New Year began a month ago, though the Church Liturgical Year began on Advent Sunday (29 Nov), and the Methodist Year tomorrow!

Fitting that we look at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry – having been baptised & having called 4 fishermen.

Jesus now in Capernaum (his ministry base) and the local synagogue on the Sabbath.

NB [1] the folk were amazed at teaching (v22); [2] they were amazed at the exorcism (v25).

At that point they questioned who Jesus was – a constant theme in Mark.

Odd that the only one who seemed to know who Jesus truly was, was the man with the evil spirit - TEXT.

How far do we know who Jesus is, or God is?

This is not about intellectual knowledge, like a subject at school. James Dunn’s three volumes.

Hymn – *immortal, invisible*; omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, etc. These are definitions of what we mean by ‘God’, but defining God is not the same as knowing God.

If those in the synagogue wanted to know Jesus, they could look at his actions, but it couldn’t end there.
If you want to know someone these days you can follow them on social media, but it cannot end there.

If you want to know God, you can begin by reading a gospel, but it cannot end there.

TEXT. To know someone properly is to enter into a personal relationship.

At this Methodist New Year we can look back at relationship with God over 2020 – eg Covid/Lockdown, Parish Mission Statement, personal crises. How far does God seem different from at the start of 2020?

This might be hard to tell, but dare we look back over time, and can we see changes over many years?

How far has our relationship with God gone? How far does God seem different from when we first met?

There is never a time when we can finally and definitively claim TEXT.

But if we are unchanged, have we really met with God? This is not to deny trust/faith, but maybe its quality.

This is not some intellectual exercise, but essential for our spiritual health, called into question in a crisis.

How can we get to know God? In the end sharing time and thoughts together – prayer if you like.

In our struggles may God grant us wisdom to know and the desire to want to know, so we can get through.