

Jesus Begins to Preach
Mark 1:14f

What's wrong with the world?

"We've got to get ourselves back to the Garden" – can't do it ourselves.

Jesus came to do that for us as described in the beginning of Mark.

14 Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

"After John...was taken into custody..."

NOTE: THE ministry of Jesus is placed in a specific historical context. This is NOT 'once upon a time', but it is after John had been taken into custody. The author is not communicating Myth but fact in real time and space.

After the baptism and temptation of Jesus we learn from John's gospel that Jesus remained in Judea near Jerusalem for a while and he overlapped with John the Baptizer. John was imprisoned for speaking out against Herod's immorality. He was eventually beheaded.

AFTER John was imprisoned, Jesus went to his home region of Galilee. Most of his public ministry took place in that region rather than in Jerusalem /Judea. Galilee was removed from the religious center of Jerusalem, and he got a more willing reception.

"Preaching Gospel of God" (Piper – God is the Gospel)

Jesus began to preach the same basic message as John - "repent and believe the gospel of God or the gospel of the kingdom of God." (Matt 4:23)

The kingdom has come because Christ has come. The people went out to hear John, but Jesus was going out to the people.

The preaching of the gospel of God is designed to make much of God and Jesus, the Son of God, not us.

We make the fatal error of thinking that our joy, meaning, purpose, and happiness in life come when we are made much of. NO. The biblical picture is that we find joy and purpose as we make much of God.

Ps 73, Isa 40, Ps 16, 103, Psalm 115

1 Not to us, O Lord, not to us, But to Your name give glory
Because of Your lovingkindness, because of Your truth.

2 Why should the nations say, "Where, now, is their God?"

3 But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.

EX: Lord's Prayer

John Piper: God is the Gospel p. 13

The gospel of Jesus Christ reveals that the great splendor of the Universe is what Paul calls the "the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Cor. 4:4). Two verses later he calls it "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

When I say that *God Is the Gospel* I mean that the highest, best, final, decisive good of the gospel, without which no other gifts would be good, is the glory of God in the face of Christ revealed for our everlasting enjoyment. The saving love of God is God's commitment to do everything necessary to enthrall us with what is most deeply and durably satisfying, namely himself.

WOULD YOU BE HAPPY WITH HEAVEN if Christ were not there? Piper raises this question...

If you could have heaven, with no sickness, and with all the friends you ever had on earth, and all the food you ever liked, and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed, and all the natural beauties you ever saw, all the physical pleasures you ever tasted, and no human conflict or any natural disasters, could you be satisfied with heaven, if Christ were not there?

TRUE CONFESSION – I'd never really thought about that before, but it is a piercing question.

Be careful how you answer. This question does not distinguish between 'strong Christian and weak Christian'. It distinguishes between Christian and non-Christian.

If our "heaven doesn't get any better than this" ideal doesn't have Christ in the center, then we're not believing in the Biblical idea of heaven. **If Jesus is a merely a heavenly accessory to supplement a place of beauty, no tears, and no conflict with family and friends, then we're not worshipping Jesus of the Gospels.**

The dignity and majesty of Christ is seen in that He is the peculiar object of the love of the Father, of the adoration of the angels in heaven, and the worship of the Church.

If Jesus is simply an accessory in your life now, what makes you think you'd enjoy heaven or end up there?

The gospels are written to show that "God with Us" is central and ultimate.

The gospel is the good news of the fulfillment of God's promises. In the OT (Isa. 40:9; 52:7; Nah. 1:15) "good news" is connected with the saving intervention of God to help his people.

For the gospel to be good news, it must be free and not earned (at least not by us.) If we have to merit the gift of the gospel, then it would not be good NEWS.

And the news and the gift of the Gospel is God Himself, i.e. His kingdom.

The gospel is proclaimed *by* Jesus, the Messiah, but in a secondary sense the good news is the report *about* Jesus. Mark communicates that Jesus is the Son of God both at the beginning and end of his Gospel (Mark 1:1; 15:39).

The gospel is the "good news" that the kingdom of God is at hand, meaning that God's rule over people's hearts and lives is now being established, and people should repent and believe in the gospel. The kingdom is more than simply the rule of the Spirit within people, since the kingdom will ultimately include the restoration of all creation (see Rev. 21:1).

"The gospel is the good news of our final and full enjoyment of the glory of God in the face of Christ. That this enjoyment had to be purchased for sinners at the cost of Christ's life makes his glory shine all the more brightly." Piper p. 14

However, Jesus has not yet revealed the fact that the kingdom will come in stages. How Jesus relates to this kingdom will be seen in the following chapters. Initially, he is the one who proclaims the coming saving rule of God.

In Jesus the invisible kingdom was being made visible, and his preaching proclaimed what the kingdom was all about. The appearance of the kingdom through the coming of The Christ called for a decision on the part of men and women. And the decision was one of repentance. More on that in a moment.

It is the GOSPEL OF God, i.e. the gospel belongs to God. Ultimately it is God, not John or even Jesus, who is giving the message. It is the Father's gospel that the Son is now preaching. (Sproul).

As the Gospel of the Kingdom, it is the announcement that the kingdom is inaugurated with the coming of Jesus.

There is a theme of the kingdom of God that runs from the OT to the NT. With the coming of Christ, the kingdom is present through the personal visitation of THE KING.

Jesus announces that "The Time" is fulfilled. This would have been shocking to a Jewish audience.

The idea of 'the time' is interesting in the OT and NT.

In the last century a Swiss theologian published a study of the use of "time" in the NT. He noted the two key words that were used:

Chronos - 'chronicle, chronology, chronometer...It refers to the moment by moment passing of time by the

second, minute, hour, day, year.

Kairos - The word kairos means a particular moment in time that is so important, so significant, that it defines everything that comes after it.

We don't have such a distinction in English. **The closest we have are the terms historical and historic.** Notice how many times they are misused. People may say that the assassination of John Kennedy was a historical event. That is true. It was a historical event—everything that takes place in space and time is historical, but not everything that takes place in history is historic.

Now **Jesus announced that the TIME – Kairos “ is fulfilled”**, i.e. spilling over; super filled. It's like the time of a woman to give birth. When then fullness has come, then it is time.

EX: Due date is chronos; Birth date is Kairos i.e. fullness

Mark describes that **THE KAIROS AND fulfillment** have come as Christ begins his ministry.

Gal 4 When the fullness time had come, God sent for his son born of a woman.

The kingdom of God is here because the KING is here.

The Gospel = Good News. This moment is also a crisis moment because there must be a response.

The word 'crisis' comes from the Greek word 'krisis' which means 'judgment'.

When the king comes, it becomes a moment of judgement or a crisis moment. The King, the Son of God can't simply be ignored. If he is, then it is at our own peril.

That crisis or judgment comes down to this: those who receive Him receive eternal life; those who do not receive Him pass into the judgment of God. So, Jesus is saying to the Jews, "Your crisis is right now." He says it to everybody in the world today who hears of Him. It is a crisis. We can't really hear the gospel of Christ and walk away indifferent. You can sit here from week to week and be indifferent but that only means that you haven't really heard the message. The significance hasn't hit home yet.

Someone here today may be having a crisis moment, i.e. a sense of judgment because you have ignored Jesus the King.

Here's the good news...The King is calling you to come, and he tells you what you need to do: **REPENT AND BELIEVE** the Gospel.

Repent and believe are two key concepts rooted in the OT and are played out in the NT as the person and work of Christ is revealed.

More has been written about these concepts over the past 2000 years than was available to the original audience.

“Repent”

Jesus followed John in calling the people to repentance. Prophets in the OT called Israel and pagan nations to repent and believe. From multiple texts we can get an idea of what repentance looked like.

Time does not permit a thorough survey of OT and NT repentance, but I do want to mention some key aspects.

EX: **In Jonah The people of Ninevah heard the message of impending judgment and they believed in God 3:5 and they put on sackcloth and ashes. V. 10 God saw their deeds and how they turned from their wicked ways.**

Ex: **Joel 2:12-14 reveals that conversion is the central element of prophetic repentance.** When authentic repentance takes place, the erring person ceases to run as fast as he can away from God and turns back to the Lord, running toward Him as he flees his sin. Conversion is a vital work that happens first and foremost within our souls, as verses 12–13 make clear.

EX: **Psalm 51 is a Psalm that reflects a heart of repentance. Penitent people realize there is nothing**

they can do to earn our Father's forgiveness, and so they always look to his mercy, not demanding His pardon but seeking it with humility. Note also that there is no attempt on David's part to continue to hide his sin. He confesses that he knows his transgressions and does not hide his guilt (Ps. 51:3). Finally, David tells the Almighty that he will associate with sinners and teach them the ways of God once he is forgiven (Ps. 51:13). A penitent person never thinks he is inherently more righteous than anyone else, and he will not think that anyone is beyond God's forgiveness.

Ex: The call to repent has an expectation to show forth the fruit of repentance Lk 3:8

Fundamentally, repentance is a change of mind, a switch from an outlook that esteems sin to an outlook that considers it abhorrent. It is important that we remember, however, that Scripture understands a true change of mind to be one that includes more than just a shifting of intellectual categories.

Acts 5:31 – Jesus is sent to give repentance to Israel.

Acts 11:18 God also grants repentance to Gentiles

Rom 2:4 the Kindness of God leads to repentance

2 Tim 2:25 'Perhaps God may grant them repentance...'

25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth...

"Believe in the gospel" – What was the gospel that Jesus called people to believe?

That the true king has arrived, and they need to switch allegiance from any other trust in life and embrace and follow Him.

Sadly, political leaders / rulers have taken this stance and people have believed them. Sometimes the people simply ask for a leader to follow.

EX 1 Sam 8-10 The people cry out to Samuel for a king and God says, "It's because they have rejected me."

EX: Human history is full of rulers who have sought or compelled worship – Roman Emperors, Japanese emperors and the cult like following of N.Korean rulers. Other rulers or political leaders were not worshipped per se but they acted like saviors. How often have people expressed the sentiment, "This is the leader we've been waiting for."

None of these leaders can give hope of eternal life or a hope for a new heaven and new earth – "getting back to the Garden."

A helpful phrase that summarizes the concepts of repent and believe is "REPENTANT FAITH"

DWJND Repentance is the path to growth and the door to change as a way of life.

Do What Jesus Never Did – REPENT Gospel repentance leads us to the cross where we meet Jesus, and change comes by being with Him.

Ex Self-Knowledge- Am I really repenting and believing???

LISTEN UP kids and youth – there is a danger here for you...

"Let me not lay my pipe too short of the fountain

Never touching the eternal spring

Never drawing down water from above.

** not laying it to reach worship, SS, youth group, small group etc BUT ETERNAL TRUTH and LIVING WATER.

Piper p. 17

The world needs nothing more than to see the worth of Christ in the work and words of his God-besotted people. This will come to pass when the church awakens to the truth that the saving love of God is the gift of himself, and that God himself is the gospel.

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Discussion group

How does this question land with you?

WOULD YOU BE HAPPY WITH HEAVEN if Christ were not there?

Why is that an important question?

What does it look like for Jesus to be an accessory rather than the center of one's life?

Why must the Gospel be free for it to be 'good news'?

How is the proclamation of the gospel a crisis moment? In what way was the gospel a crisis for you?

What does DWJND mean? How is it different from WWJD?