

# STONE HARBOR

P.O. Box 4049  
Monterey CA, 93942  
831.655.5800  
[www.stoneharborchurch.org](http://www.stoneharborchurch.org)  
Pastor Johnny Potter

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## Discovering Who Jesus Is By Examining What He Did

Mark 1:14-28

### *Introduction*

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. 2 Tim 3:16-17

### *Jesus Preached the GOSPEL*

#### **On Preaching**

Preach = to proclaim as a herald. John preached in v. 4 and 7. It occurs to me that a herald doesn't come up with the message, rather he delivers the message the King determines. John proclaimed the message God put on his heart calling people to repentance (v.4) and announcing... [read vv 7-8].

And John's message was right on target because right on the heels of John's preaching Jesus came. And in our passage this morning we pick up the story and we see that Jesus preached too.

#### **On The Content of the Gospel Jesus Preached**

- Mark called what Jesus preached, "the gospel of God" the good news about God.
- "The time is fulfilled..." – what time? This sounds once again like prophecy language. Clark: The time predicted by the prophets, for the appearance of the Messiah, is accomplished."

Gal 4:4 – But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son,...

Heb 1:1-2 -- God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son...

What time is fulfilled? The time God had established for mankind to live under the old covenant mediated by Moses, before the establishing of a new and better covenant mediated by Jesus -- The time up to the time when God would inaugurate His Kingdom under the rule of the Messiah, Jesus, His Son.

Like a student taking a test: "Time's up!" – the designated time is done.  
Or like the executioner to a death row inmate: "It is time."  
Better: Like a parent to a child ready to go to snow camp: "It is time to go."  
Better still: Like a coach focusing his team before a big game.

That is the first part of the gospel according to Jesus: **the time is fulfilled**. If I were to hear this as a Roman living in Jesus' day, I would expect something new and good to be just about to happen. "OK it is time for this new good thing to happen. Now who is going to bring this good new chapter into reality?" Jesus continues his preaching of the Gospel of God...

- **"the kingdom of God is at hand"** – Romans would certainly understand the concept of a kingdom. They were ruled at that time by a king, an emperor. He made and enforced laws, he provided security from foreign people... He carried major authority over everyone's lives. But Jesus announces not the arrival of the Kingdom of Assyria, or the Kingdom of Babylon – earthly rulers -- but the Kingdom of God (KOG).

This has got to make Mark's readers, us included, wonder what this "KOG" which is "at hand" is like and who will lead it practically speaking.

Mark has already said, that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God. John has said that Jesus (the person coming after him) was way more worthy than he, and that Jesus will baptize people with the Holy Spirit. God has said of Jesus that He is His beloved Son in whom He is well pleased. If Mark's readers are thoughtful readers, they will be putting it together: The Kingdom of God is at hand in that Jesus, the Son of God, is at hand.

But that is not all the story, is it? If the Gospel was that Jesus Christ was at hand then that is what Jesus would have preached: I am here. But the gospel is not only about the presence of, but it is about the rule of God. A kingdom is the place of the rule of a king. The kingdom of God is the place where God rules.

I make note that the KOG co-existed with the kingdom of the Roman Empire. The Roman king did not have to be overthrown in order for the KOG to be at hand. Maybe that is because human kings exert their authority over only a certain subset of matters, and God's kingdom is concerned primarily over another set of matters.

On a personal note: The gospel according to Jesus is about God's timing and His kingdom, that it is at hand. With Jesus coming as Christ and beloved Son of God, it is easy for me to identify Jesus as King of God's kingdom. Yet, I am a product of my American evangelical Christian context and resultantly I see Jesus as my Savior, and friend, more than I do as my King and my Lord. If God's kingdom has come in Jesus' coming, that would make me a **subject** in His kingdom. He would issue the decrees and I would submit myself to His authority. Jesus is of course both Savior and King, but I do believe it to be true that, in broad generalizations, to which there are many notable exceptions, we do not embrace God as king and ourselves as subjects to the degree we should. If we did we would not have the same divorce rate within the church as without. We would not have Christians participating in the lust of the flesh and the activities of the world with the same degree of indulgence as our non-Christians neighbors.

Mark seems to want us at this point to take note of the fact that first and foremost at this time the Gospel is about the **Kingdom** of God being at hand. I think it is completely appropriate for us to pause a moment this morning and ask ourselves, are we living in the reality only of the democracy of men and ourselves as voters, or do we regard God in Christ Jesus as our King and ourselves as His subjects in His Kingdom? Do we live in the Kingdom of God?

Now, we do live in a democracy – praise God! And I encourage all of you to engage in the political process, get informed about the issues, and vote responsibly for what you deem best for our country. But although we live in a democracy with our fellow Americans; we live in a Kingdom in relation to our God. “[T]he time is fulfilled the kingdom of God is at hand”!

What does the truth of the good news that Jesus brought the Kingdom of God to man and in new way call for? Hurricane Ike called for the evacuation of South Eastern Texas. We call men like Bobby Taylor fools.

"It's dangerous, but it's Mother Nature," Bobby Taylor, 47, who planned to stay, told the Chronicle. "There are good parts about it. It's beautiful. The water doesn't frighten me." He told the paper he could walk or kayak out if necessary. "It's just water, man."

From a CNN.Com article on Friday morning  
<http://www.cnn.com/2008/US/weather/09/12/hurricane.ike.texas/index.htm>  
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“The time is fulfilled” and “the kingdom of God is at hand.” What does this announcement call for? Jesus gives us two action points

### **Jesus on responding to the gospel**

1. **Repent** – M&M: change ones mind, imperative mood, in present tense implying continuity – JP: repent now and continue to repent. Clark: Repentance “expresses and inward change of views and feelings, and implies a sorrow for sin, a turning to God; and a change of conduct...” p.32

No particular sin has been mentioned yet in this gospel. So I’m inclined to think that the repentance that Jesus is calling people to here is the change of mind in regards to the reality of the KOG. How easy it was for the people of Jesus day, how easy it is for us, to live in the reality of our earthly life and in a void of acknowledgement of the reality of God and His kingdom being here.

I think the repentance Jesus is calling us to is the change of mind that allows us to see KOG and be the subjects of God’s rule. It is a repentance that I need to do. I get caught up and focused in things of the world just like you do.

So here we are Lord, with more to say about Obamah, McAin, Biden, and Palin, than we have to say about You and Your platform and the change You want to bring. So this morning we refocus and look at not what is right in front of our faces, but out the distance – like a camera focused on a close up letting the focus change to the bigger picture. Help me be a responsible earthly citizen, but not forsaking the more important obligations of my heavenly citizenship. Help me change my thought life from energy sources, national security to the Holy Spirit and eternal security; from universal health care, to forgiveness of sins and salvation; from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, to spiritual warfare with God’s foe, Satan. Oh Lord, we listen to the news, help us give ear to the good news, the gospel of God that Jesus here preached.

The first thing Jesus calls us to in response to the good news that the time is fulfilled and the KOG is at hand is to repent. Yes that is a changing of your mind in regards to sin, but is especially a changing of your mind in neglect of awareness and response to the reality of Kingdom of God being at hand right here and right now. The second thing Jesus calls us to do in response to the gospel is to...

2. **Believe in the gospel** – Believe: M&M “in such a way that you adhere to it.” What is it to believe? It is to place your trust in someone or something.

I think of Kara in my arms.

I think of Tim Keller’s illustration of grabbing a rope tossed to you after you have slipped off a cliff and hang precariously on a little ledge only with great effort. The person who never grabs the rope because they are not convinced that the rope will hold them, perishes because they can’t hold on to the ledge for long. The person that reaches out and grabs the rope even though he or she does not have 100% conviction that the rope will hold them, this person will be saved.

Here, Jesus exhorts us to believe, not in human strength, or in a rope tossed to you, but “in the gospel.” And the gospel as we have it so far ...

#### **The Gospel From Last Week (vv 1-13)**

- is that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God (v.1), that He has always been a part of God’s plan (vv2-3),
- that He is in a league of His own being better and more worthy than the very worthy John the Baptist, able to baptize people with the God’s Holy Spirit;
- that He is God’s beloved Son in whom God announced from heaven that He is well pleased. than...

#### **The Gospel From This Passage (vv 14-15)**

- “the time is fulfilled”
- “the kingdom of God is at hand”

Who is Jesus? We are getting to know Him this morning by examining His deeds. Jesus is the King of the Kingdom of God and He has called us to repent and believe. Let’s look at what else Jesus did that we might know Him more.

### ***Jesus Called People to FOLLOW Him***

Let’s read Mark 1:16-20.

The broad stroke of Mark’s telling of the disciples following Jesus at His first request conveys the thought that the disciples very spontaneously left all behind and followed Jesus. There is more detail in the other gospels that Mark chooses to leave out. These disciples had actually known Jesus for several months before He called them to follow Him. Yet, to Mark what is important is that Jesus said, “Follow Me” and they did! Let’s take a look at Jesus command.

### **“Follow Me!” – The Command**

What it meant to Peter and the boys – For Simon, Andrew, James and John following Jesus meant that they would leave behind their income producing activity and family and literally follow Jesus around the countryside preaching His message that the KOG was at hand. They would spend their days with Him, unless He sent them on mission. They would depend on Him for their food. They would learn from Him. They would respond to Him. Their lives were organized by the agenda He set.

Some are called into full time Christian service where following Jesus is their job; all are called to following Jesus as their first priority.

Jesus call to His disciples then was, “Follow Me!”

Jesus call to His disciples now is, “Follow Me!”

How are we doing? Are we following Jesus? Are we spending time with Him learning from Him and doing what He says and becoming more like Him? If so, keep it up! If not, today is a good day to put first things first. Do those devotions, memorize those Scriptures, develop all the habits of a good spiritual fitness training program we spoke about in the last series, but most of all just figure out for yourself how to follow Him the best you can in your life situation and follow!

### **“I will make you become fishers of men”**

- Why would Jesus have us follow Him? So that we would become fishers of men. Simon Peter and Andrew were fishermen (v.16 and ctx). Now Jesus was going to have them “catch” men not fish. He does not say what the purpose of catching men was but you kind of go with the general thought of catching men for the purposes of God.
- “I will make you become fishers...” interesting wording. Not, “I will make you fishers of men.” To me this speaks of a process of transformation from fishermen to fishers of men. It is not, “I declare you fishers of men,” but “follow me and over time I will see to it that you are changed into fishers of men.”
  - This is a more than a change in activity (I will teach you how to fish); it is a change in identity (I will make you fishers of men). I had to ask myself, Johnny, is this your identity? Do you see yourself as a fisher of men. Or do you see yourself as a professional pastor? How about you? Is this your identity? Do you see yourself as a teacher, or a fisher of men who has a job teaching; as an employee, or as a fisher of men who earns his living as an employee; as a business owner, or as a fisher of men who owns a business? I think God would have us see ourselves first as fishers of men. That is who Jesus is making His followers.

- Personal Evaluation: If I'm a fisher of men, I need to spend some more time fishing. How about you? I need to fish as an individual and we need to fish as a church.
  - As individuals: Just Walk Across the Room, take an interest in them, share the hope you have with others and point them to Jesus, invite them to your community group, to church on Sunday
  - As Church: Door hangers, advertising, messages that catch.

### **Fishing is Expensive**

- **"...they left their father..."** – Following Jesus requires leaving those who don't. This is a leaving behind of good for what is best in the eyes of God.
- **Following Jesus and becoming fishers of men is costly: If I hang door hangers and walk across some rooms, I'm going to not do something else I'm doing with that time right now.** Is it worth it? The angles in heaven rejoice when one sinner repents. Yes, it is absolutely worth it.

Who is Jesus? He is the Son of God who calls us to follow Him. He is the One who is making us fishers of men. Lord God, help us to embrace this transformation you are doing in our lives, help us partner with You as you make us Your people who catch people for Your purposes. Let's take a look at one more activity of Jesus that reveals who He is. Let's read verses 21-28...

### ***Jesus TAUGHT with Unique Authority***

He taught the Scriptures (21-22) – the synagogue had become the gathering of Jews much like the church is today. The Scriptures would be read and expounded on and then the rulers of the synagogue would allow the learned men in attendance to address the people. (Clark p. 36) Jesus availed Himself of this platform.

He did so with noticeable authority. The scribes were the teachers of the Scriptures. There was a marked difference between their teaching and Jesus teaching.

He "taught" the unclean Spirits (23ff)

His teaching of the Scriptures was validated by His "teaching" the unclean spirit.

TRANS. – Who is Jesus? He is the Teacher with unique authority to interpret Scripture and command unclean spirits.

### ***Conclusion***

**Luke 6:40** A pupil is not above **his teacher**; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be **like his teacher**.

Jesus preached the gospel of God proclaiming the time is fulfilled, the KOG is at hand. If this is news to you it is probably enough just to be exposed to this and let it sink in. If you have already processed this truth, then it is time to apply it and consider how it should transform you. How do you apply this truth and be transformed by it? You begin to be a herald of this same message – **you become a preacher of the Gospel of God** showing and telling people that now more than ever the time is fulfilled and the KOG is at hand. I wonder if you are not here this morning just because God wants you to move from recipient of the good news to proclaimer of the good news.

Jesus called people to follow Him and He would make them fishers of men. Some of you you need to hear these words and follow Jesus yourselves. Some need to partner with God more intentionally as He makes you a fisher of men by learning how to fish. Still others of you need to be transformed into the image of Christ even more by yourself calling people to follow you as you follow Christ. You have become the fisher of men that God has called you to so now you, enabled by God, make others fishers of men.

Jesus taught the scriptures with unique authority. For those young in the Lord you will just want to be in His “class” and learn from the best. For the more mature in the Lord, you have already established the lifelong pattern of learning from Jesus your master teacher; you will want to become like Him, a teacher yourself.

There is the specific content of this passage that I hope you have taken in this morning and then there is the general attitude that I plead with you to adopt: it is the attitude of the learner who is seeking to learn from Jesus and also to become like Him. Some things I preach you will already know, if you do, then you have been around long enough to take another step towards Christ likeness. You were a preacher, Lord Jesus; You called people to follow You; You were a teacher with authority...Lord how can I become more like you in these activities.

Much loved children of God, the KOG needs more preachers of the good news, needs more leaders of others to follow them as they follow Christ, more teachers of truth, and more confronters of demons. You have been saved for God’s purposes. Wrestle with the truths of Scripture until you have done with them all that God would have you do with them at this time in your Christian life. Do this as a Sunday morning pattern.

Enough for today.

May you go in peace with God and motivated to live your lives for His glory.

Let’s pray.