

## The Gospel of the Kingdom

Mark 1:14-15

*“When you hear the bells ringing out at Christmas, think of the reason why Jesus was born. Dream not that He came to load your tables and fill your cups, but in your mirth look higher than all earth-born things. When you hear that in certain churches there are pompous celebrations and ecclesiastical displays, think not for this purpose was Jesus born. No, but look within your hearts, and say, for this purpose was He born: that He might be a King, that He might rule through the truth in the souls of a people who are by grace made to love the truth of God,”* Charles Spurgeon.<sup>i</sup>

As you consider the life and ministry of Jesus, what comes to mind? What was His purpose for coming to the earth? Was He merely a man who lived a good life, having an unnatural ability to expound the Scriptures and supernaturally perform miracles; or, was He more than a mere man with exceptional ability? Our text today reveals much about this Jesus and the reason for His coming to earth in the form of a man. He came with purpose – a purpose ordained of God, the Father before the foundation of the world.

Mark’s Gospel is one of the synoptic Gospels, along with Matthew and Luke. These Gospels reveal the same accounts of Jesus’ life and ministry. Mark was written to a Gentile audience, possibly to the church in Rome. He presents Jesus as the Servant of the Lord. The key verse is [Mark 10:45](#) – **For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.** This servant of men humbled Himself, being obedient to the death of the cross to redeem the fallen.

The focus of our text today is the Gospel of the Kingdom. The main point of the message is: We must respond to the Gospel of the Kingdom. One might ask, why must we respond to the Gospel of the Kingdom? We must respond to the Gospel of the Kingdom because of the following reasons.

**I. Because of a Present Reality (15) – **The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.**** This was very early in Jesus’ ministry. He had just been baptized of John and spent forty days in the wilderness being tempted of Satan. Yet, at this early moment, Jesus declared the time is fulfilled. What exactly was Jesus speaking of? What time had been fulfilled? We know that Jesus came with purpose, to provide the atoning sacrifice for sin, and yet He knew He had to reveal Himself as the Christ, the promised Messiah. The time of God’s promise for a Messiah had been fulfilled. Christ had come as the prophets of old had promised. [Gal.4:4-5](#) – **But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,**  
<sup>5</sup> [To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.](#)

▪ Through the words of Jesus, and the declaration of the time being fulfilled, we are reminded of the promise of God and His sovereign plan. Since the beginning of time, and especially since the Garden of Eden, God has been directing the course of history toward an ultimate conclusion. Sin had entered the heart of man, and thus humanity inherited the sin of Adam, our father in the flesh. God's glorious creation had been marred by sin; it is now corrupt and destined for destruction. Sin required a sacrifice that God alone could provide. This sacrifice would atone for sin and provide the means of redemption and restoration to God. The atoning sacrifice came in the Person of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. **John 3:16-17 – For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**  
<sup>17</sup> **For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.**

▪ The present reality is that the time has been fulfilled. The fulness of time has come. God's Son came to earth, just as He promised. He offered Himself the atoning sacrifice for sin. Redemption has been provided. All the saved are given eternal life in Christ. There is no need to look for another. Jesus was the promised Messiah. He is the Savior of the world. **1 Tim.2:5-6 – For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;** <sup>6</sup> **Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.** *“The good news is that sin has been dealt with; that Jesus has suffered its penalty for us as our representative, so that we might never have to suffer it; and that therefore all who believe in him can look forward to heaven. The only true gospel is of the one mediator (1 Tim. 2:5–6), who gave himself for us,”* J. M. Boice.<sup>ii</sup>

➤ Secondly, we must respond to the Gospel of the Kingdom...

**II. Because of a Progressive Reality (15) – The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.** Here we discover one of the great mysteries of Scripture. We must take Jesus at His word. He declared, as He spoke at that moment, “the kingdom of God is at hand.” Thus, one must agree that the Kingdom of God was at hand through the life, ministry, and work of Jesus Christ. The fulfillment of God's promise had arrived in the form of a humble servant. The God-Man had left the glories of heaven and invaded the presence of humanity. In Christ, the Kingdom purposes of God were revealed and provision was made for those who will dwell eternally within the Kingdom.

▪ However, as one considers the words of Jesus regarding the kingdom of God being at hand, there is an “already” and “not yet” aspect of the Kingdom. Herein lies the mystery. As was stated a moment ago, God has been directing the course of history toward an ultimate conclusion. Christ provided redemption for mankind as He died upon the cross for our sin. He rose triumphantly from the grave, conquering sin, death, and hell. He ascended back to the Father with a promise to come again for the redeemed. The Kingdom was at hand in Jesus' day and the Kingdom is at hand in our day. The Lord is coming again, just as He promised. He will come again

in power and great glory, defeating His enemies and establishing His kingdom here upon the earth. At the end of the Millennial Reign, Satan will be bound and cast into the lake of fire. The new heaven and earth will descend from God out of heaven. [Rev.20:2-3](#) – And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. [Eph.1:10-12](#) – That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him: <sup>11</sup> In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: <sup>12</sup> That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

- Ken Hemphill, President of Southwestern Baptist Seminary, stated, “*When Jesus made this declaration, the kingdom was “at hand” in the flesh. It was fully expressed in the Son of Man, yet not fully realized on earth or even among His followers. Nonetheless, the seed of the kingdom had been sown and the harvest of the kingdom is now assured.*”<sup>iii</sup> We are moving toward the fulfillment of God’s purpose for the kingdom. Are you ready should Christ come today?
- Finally, we must respond to the Gospel of the Kingdom...

**III. Because of Personal Responsibility (15)** – **The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.** Due to the time being fulfilled and the kingdom being at hand, Jesus spoke of the responsibility of mankind. These were not mere suggestions for those who hear the gospel of the kingdom, but direct commands for which all who hear must respond. This personal responsibility is two-fold. First, those who hear the gospel must:

**A. Repent** – Jesus commands those who hear the gospel to repent. As one would expect, He is referring to repentance of sin. This speaks of “turning from unbelief and sin unto the Lord and His gospel.” This is an essential aspect of receiving the gospel unto salvation. Repentance is necessary for salvation. One must come to a realization of their sinfulness, their separation from God due to their sin, and be willing to turn from that sin unto the Lord. It is not merely forsaking the sin of our past, but literally turning from our sin unto the Lord. [Isaiah 55:7](#) – *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

**B. Believe the Gospel** – Along with repentance, one must believe the gospel. This is not merely agreeing with the truth of the gospel (the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for the redemption of sin), but actually believing the gospel by faith. One must see their own need for Christ and believe that He alone can redeem and save. One must place their faith and trust in Christ and in Him alone. His perfect work of redemption on the cross and resurrection for our justification alone provided the necessary work to secure our salvation. [Rom.10:9-10](#) – *That if*

thou shalt confess (consent, admit and agree, proclaim publicly) with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.<sup>10</sup> For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

➤ *“Repentance by itself does not satisfy the law which was formerly broken. A person may repent and change from his former life, but repentance is not enough. Payment and satisfaction must be made for the laws he has already broken. This is why a person must believe in the good news about Jesus Christ... Faith by itself does not satisfy the law. Faith without repentance, without a true change of life, is insincere. It is profession only. It presumes upon God, thinking He will excuse a self-centered life just like a grandfather who unwisely pampers and indulges a spoiled grandchild. Faith in Christ, in His satisfaction for sin, and repentance are both essential to enter the Kingdom of God.”*<sup>iv</sup>

**Conclusion:** We must believe the Gospel of the Kingdom because of a Present Reality, because of a Progressive Reality, and because of a Personal Responsibility. The time has been fulfilled; the kingdom of God is at hand. The Lord is coming soon! Have you repented and believed the gospel? If not, don't put it off. You have heard and the Lord commands you to repent and believe. Christian, are you living as if you believe the kingdom is at hand? Come to Christ today!

---

<sup>i</sup> Elliot Ritzema, ed., [300 Quotations and Prayers for Christmas](#), Pastorum Series (Lexham Press, 2013).

<sup>ii</sup> Mark Water, [The New Encyclopedia of Christian Quotations](#) (Alresford, Hampshire: John Hunt Publishers Ltd, 2000), 182.

<sup>iii</sup> Ken Hemphill, “Jesus Came Preaching the Kingdom,” *Preaching: The Professional Journal for Ministry Leaders*, November 2023.

<sup>iv</sup> Leadership Ministries Worldwide, [The Gospel according to Mark](#), The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible (Chattanooga, TN: Leadership Ministries Worldwide, 1996), 20.