

Jesus' First Sermon

Mark 1:14-15

(preached 8/3/2014 Pine Grove BC AM Service)

For 52% of all babies, their first word is Dad.

For 35%, mama is the first word.

After that the percentages fall off.

For 5%, the first word is Hi.

Followed by Bubba, Dog, Ball, No, Cat, Nana and Bye.

We believe all our kids first word was Dada.

You wait all that time to hear the first words, then you spend the rest of your life, asking them to hush.

Well, today, we are going to hear Jesus' first words.

Not his first words as a baby, but his first words in ministry.

In the original Greek, it was only 15 words.

In the New American Standard translation that I will preach from today, it 18 words.

And I would say to you that the message of the entire Bible is found in these 18 words of Jesus.

It is so important that we will only look at two verses today.

Yes, I understand that at this pace, we won't finish the book of Mark until the next decade.

I promise you the pace will pick up.

Mark will not let us slow down, but these two verses are so important that we need to take our time here.

They are going to give us a big picture view of the Bible that we all need.

Sometimes we can get so focused on the details that we need to step back and get a wider view.

One of the schemes of Satan is to get us so focused on ourselves that we miss what God is doing.

For example, our family has bad days at seminary.

I may have had a horrible day at school.

Assignments are backing up. Time is ticking down.

Tonya may have had a hard day with homeschool.

On those days, we would sit down with each other, take a deep breath and remember the big picture.

“The Lord has brought us to school. We are here in obedience to him.”

The purpose of being here is to get trained to be a pastor, so we can go into the world and make disciples.

Just that short time of stepping back is so helpful at times.

You know, we finished painting in the parsonage.

And sometimes we you can get so frustrated trying when you mess up a small detail.

So what do you do?

You get off the ladder, take a few steps back and get a big picture look and you feel better.

And it is important for you to get the big picture of Scripture.

Do the details of your life matter? You bet they do.

God sees all and knows all.

But does a big picture matter?

Yes, because we are a people that tend to live in our little bubble of life.

Yet the truth is that we like to exclude God from that bubble.

Yet, God owns you and the bubble.

And He is working out his plans in the world in history in His way.

And the truth that you need to know is how do you fit into that plan?

In 18 words that are going to come from Jesus' mouth today, we are going to answer some of the most important questions of all time..

Like..

Who is God?

What is the meaning of life?

What is God doing in the world?

How can I know God?

How can I be right with God?

These are questions that we all have, but often we get distracted with our own little world...

And fail to see the bigger world.

We get so caught up in how we spend our time....

That we forget what God has been doing since the beginning of time.

And the truth is that you can live your entire life and completely ignore what God is doing in the world and in time.

But it is also equally true that you will one day understand the big picture and it will be too late.

Look, the other night we went into Hobby Lobby.

We are trying to decorate the house little by little.

And they have a section of nothing but oil and gas signs.

Now, I'm a huge fan of American Pickers.

And I could have easily grabbed a buggy and begin filling it up.

I could have easily ignored the big picture view of my small checking account.

And I could have just wandered through the store ignoring the fact that I had no money.

But when I went through check-out, I would have figured out that I didn't have enough money.

Cash registers are great reminders of the big picture.

And I want to say to you, you can't just wander through life...

And then expect to just walk out the door into another world after death.

You can't just ignore the big picture and hope that God looks the other way one day.

God has been at work since the beginning of time, and he is at work now.

There is a bigger picture that goes beyond our little pictures of the world.

And that is what we will look at today.

Jesus' first sermon is so important for us to hear.

So get ready to listen.

You are going to hear the Greatest Preacher preach the greatest sermon in the least amount of words.

And in the process, you will get to see the big picture of the Scriptures that is so important for all of us to understand.

So, let's read Mark 1:14-15 ..

¹⁴ Now after John had been ^[h]taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, ^[i]preaching the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God ^[i]is at hand; repent and ^[k]believe in the gospel.”

I just divided this text into 2 simple parts.

First, we will look at the....

Perils of Preaching....

Then we will examine the

Point of Preaching....

So, let's begin with the first part of verse 14...

I. The Perils of Preaching (v. 14a)

“Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee preaching....”

Now, the John that Mark is talking about is the John of the verses above...

It is John the Baptist, the messenger that came before Jesus.

He was sent before Jesus to announce his arrival and to call people to repentance.

And John, like Jesus, was a preacher.

And like Jesus, John the Baptist was not the most popular man on earth.

In fact, Mark says that he was taken in custody.

Another way to say this is that John was delivered up...

And that is no accident that Mark writes that John was delivered up...

Because who also will be delivered up to the authorities?

Well, Jesus will.

In Mark 9:31, Jesus told his disciples that he would be delivered to the hands of evil men.

Then in Mark 15:1, the religious leaders deliver Jesus up to Pilate.

Jesus comes preaching after John, and Jesus will be eventually be delivered up, just like John.

But why was John the Baptist delivered up?

Well if you take your bibles and flip to Mark 6, we will find out...

Beginning in verse 17....

¹⁷ For Herod himself had sent and had John arrested and bound in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, because he had married her. ¹⁸ For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." ¹⁹ Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death and could not do so; ²⁰ for Herod was afraid of John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. And when he heard him, he was very perplexed; ^[l] but he ^[m] used to enjoy listening to him. ²¹ A strategic day came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his lords and ^[n] military commanders and the leading men of Galilee; ²² and when the daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced, she pleased Herod and ^[o] his dinner guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever

you want and I will give it to you.”²³ And he swore to her, “Whatever you ask of me, I will give it to you; up to half of my kingdom.”²⁴ And she went out and said to her mother, “What shall I ask for?” And she said, “The head of John the Baptist.”²⁵ Immediately she came in a hurry to the king and asked, saying, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”²⁶ And although the king was very sorry, yet because of his oaths and because of ^[p]his dinner guests, he was unwilling to refuse her.²⁷ Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded him to bring back his head. And he went and had him beheaded in the prison,²⁸ and brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother.²⁹ When his disciples heard about this, they came and took away his body and laid it in a tomb.

The truth is that John was delivered up and eventually killed because he told the truth.

And unfortunately the truth is offensive at times.

Herod did want to hear it, and neither did his mistress.

But John the Baptist thought the truth was the most important thing...

And it eventually cost him his life.

Yet another reason not to become a preacher.

You may be killed.

But hear me, this is not just a peril or danger for preachers..

Anyone who shares the truth of the Bible is subject to the same penalty.

Every Christian who shares the truth is subject to this punishment.

The truth is offensive.

The truth is hard to hear.

Romans says that men like to suppress the truth.

And that just means that some people would rather do anything that hear the truth.

They will stop coming to church to avoid hearing the truth.

They will stop hanging around Christians to avoid hearing the truth.

They will daydream in church to avoid hearing the truth.

It's like the little boy who mom is yelling for him to get out of the pool.

Everytime she yells, he goes under the water.

And some of you are underwater, it is easier not to listen to your need of salvation....

Than to turn from your sin and trust in Jesus alone to save you.

The truth is offensive.

And John the Baptist learned that the truth can be deadly.

But the truth always moves ahead because look what Mark writes....

After Jon had been taken into custody, ***Jesus came into Galilee preaching...***

The one who baptized Jesus is arrested, yet Jesus comes preaching.

This makes no sense to us.

The threat of being arrested keeps us from doing the crime.

But that is not the case with the truth.

The truth makes us speak.

The truth makes us act.

The truth causes us to put our lives on the line.

And we know how the story ends with Jesus.

He was arrested and crucified because he also told people the truth....

And they hated him for it.

In fact, in the beginning of his ministry, we went to his hometown of Nazareth and preached.

These are the folks that he grew up with.

They saw him as a little boy.

They knew his family.

And now he is a preacher from their hometown.

If he is going to be received anywhere, this is the place.

So, he gets up and preaches the truth...

And guess what?

They try to throw him off a cliff.

So much for a hometown welcome.

That is the nature of truth.

It enrages people.

Yet, Jesus did not decide to avoid sharing the truth.

And you know why?

The truth is the most loving thing you can do for someone.

And he was the most loving person to ever walk the earth.

And that love caused him to preach the truth in spite of the great dangers around him.

And before you get the picture that Jesus was this person who walked around wagging his finger at everyone....

Think again.

He shared the truth in the most loving way imaginable.

With the most gentleness imaginable.

And he did it knowing that it would cost him his life.

So, now that we've seen that preaching is dangerous, and has many perils...

Let's look at...

II. The Point of Preaching

The end of v.14..

¹⁴ Now after John had been ^[h]taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, ^[i]preaching the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God ^[i]is at hand; repent and ^[k]believe in the gospel.”

We learn so much here...

Jesus could have preached about anything....

But he chose to focus on the gospel of God.

The good news of God.

The good news from God.

The good news by God.

And here are those 18 words that really are a summary of the Bible.

The small sermon that provides a big picture.

According to Mark, Jesus is preaching the gospel of God.

And I am a preacher of the gospel.

But the question remains, well what is the gospel?

And we talked about this some 2 weeks ago, but I want to talk more about it more here.

Because Jesus helps us to see what the good news really is...

And there are 3 very important ideas that we need to see here.

First, we need to see the big picture of Jesus sermon and that is found in the words...

“the kingdom of God”

Now, when people hear those words, there is often confusion over exactly what the kingdom of God is.

And I will say to you that as Americans, we are at a disadvantage when it comes to understanding this idea.

We have never lived under a king.

We have grown up in a system of government where the power doesn't lie in a central figure.

But that is not true in a kingdom.

A kingdom has an absolute ruler, and though we can read about kingdoms and kings....

It is sometimes hard to relate to that idea.

So, it is important for us to look at this idea of a king and a kingdom in the Bible.

In Jesus' first sermon to the world, he referred to the kingdom of God...

And this is not the last place it will be mentioned.

So, this idea is something we need to examine more closely.

Therefore, loosen those fingers up....

We are going to go through the Bible for a minute and look at this very important doctrine of the kingdom of God.

So, in Mark 1:14-15, you have Jesus first sermon and he talks about the kingdom.

But now flip with me to Acts 1:1.

Now understand, Jesus has been crucified and resurrected.

He is preparing to go back to the Father.

He is leaving his disciples, and they are to go to the nations and make disciples.

This is an important time in history.

What are the last things that he should say to them?

How should he prepare them for what is ahead?

Listen to what Luke wrote, Acts 1:1...

1 The first account I ^[a]composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach, ² until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had ^[b]by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. ³ To ^[c]these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Guess what Jesus taught in his last sermons?

The kingdom of God.

And if you follow the preaching throughout the rest of the NT, there is preaching about the kingdom of God.

In fact, some have said that the theme of the Bible is the Kingdom of God.

And I tend to agree.

The kingdom is the theme and the center of the kingdom is Jesus.

If I were asked what is the story of the Bible?

I would say that the Bible is the story of the kingdom of God with Jesus as the King of that kingdom.

And this is why I would say that....

We are going to flip to a couple Scriptures...

And I want you to follow along.

Because if you see this, you will see the big picture of this world.

So turn with me to Gen 1:26.

We need to go to the very beginning to see this.

Now what does every kingdom need?

First, every kingdom needs an area to be ruled and things to rule over.

Then, it needs a ruler.

And then it needs the ruler to begin ruling.

My tiny little town of Whitmire is known as a speed trap.

Let's look at it as the speed kingdom.

So, it needs an area to be ruled.

The speed limit is in effect all inside the city limits.

And it needs subjects to be ruled.

Well, that is easy. There are cars going through there all day.

And it needs a ruler, who are the cops.

Finally, it needs the cops to actually rule, which they do when they stop speeding cars.

And so when we get to Genesis 1:26, God is busy establishing His kingdom in the world.

He has created a place for His kingdom in the first 25 verses of Gen. 1.

And then we read in Gen 1:26...

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the ^[ak]sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the ^[al]sky and over every living thing that ^[am]moves on the earth."

God created man to rule.

Every kingdom needs a ruler, and man was created in God's image to rule for Him over the earth.

Yet, in Gen. 3, man gives up the right to rule when he sins against God.

And Adam's right to rule was taken away.

This isn't hard to imagine.

A father gives his son a business, but the first week, the son fails to do what his father asked him to do.

So, the father takes away the business from the son.

That happens all the time.

And that is what happened in the very beginning.

Adam sinned against God and could no longer rule as the Lord intended him to rule.

But the truth is that God never changed his plan.

His plans always go forth, do the story after Gen. 3 is how can a sinful man rule for a holy God?

And if you take your Bibles, the story between Gen 3 and Rev. 21 is the story of how sinful men...

Can be made right before a holy God.

Because God didn't change his plan.

He didn't say...

“Oh well. I need to think of something new with this world I created.”

Since man is no longer able to rule, I will come up with another plan.

No. God will still have a kingdom ruled by men.

It will just have to be delayed.

In the illustration of the father taking the business away from his son....

It's not that the father just decides to sell the business and do something else....

No, the business will be run by his son one day, he just needs to find a way to correct his son's error.

God's plans are never changed.

Because if you take your Bibles and flip back to the very end of them to Rev. 22, you need to see this....

Rev 22..beginning in verse 3...

John is writing about the new Jerusalem, the place where those who are saved will spend their eternity...

And listen to what he writes....

³ There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; ⁴ they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ And there will no longer be any night; and they ^[d] will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.

Now catch that last part, what will God's people, be doing for eternity.

They will be reigning. Or ruling.

Over this new creation.

God who established a new creation to be ruled by men will one day see this come true.

The truth is that God's plans always come to pass.

And so when Jesus comes on the scene and preaches the good news....

HE has to talk about the kingdom of God.

Because that is the big idea of Scripture.

The kingdom of God was the plan from the beginning of creation.

And the bad news is that man ruined that plan temporarily with his sin.

But the good news, the gospel that Jesus is preaching here in Mark 1...

Is that the kingdom of God is near.

And what he means is that God's plans to establish his kingdom are closer than ever because the One who has a right to rule has come to earth.

The wonderful news about Jesus is that He will succeed everywhere that Adam failed.

Adam was tempted and he sinned.

Jesus was tempted and he remained sinless.

Adam continued to sin.

Jesus remained sinless.

Adam couldn't rule the kingdom because was a sinful man.

Jesus can rule the kingdom because he is a sinless man.

And Jesus is saying that the kingdom is now possible.

Because the rightful King has arrived.

The big picture of the Bible is that you were made to rule, but because of your sin...

You have given up that right.

And you have no hope of ever getting in to God's kingdom because of that sin.

You can't crawl over the fence.

You can't swim across the ocean.

You can't dig under the wall

The truth is that that fence is too high, the ocean is too wide, and your shovel ain't big enough.

The only way into that kingdom is through the King himself.

And you may say, I have no desire for that kingdom.

I'm just fine ruling my own world.

Well, the Scriptures say that God's kingdom is the only one that will last forever.

In fact, in Daniel, God's kingdom is described as a rock that crushes all other kingdom.

The fact is that your kingdom will one be destroyed.

Your world will one day crumble.

And the only kingdom that will last is the Lord's kingdom.

And the great news is that you can still be a part of that kingdom today.

But only if you are in a right relationship with the King today.

And that is where we see the two other important words of Jesus' first sermon.

Jesus takes us from the big picture to our little world.

Because after he preached to the people that the kingdom was near, he challenged their hearts to do two things...

That really are just one action.

How do you become a citizen of God's kingdom?

Jesus said to repent and believe in the gospel.

This is the proper response to the gospel.

How do you know if you are saved?

Have you repented and believed?

Repentance is simply a turning from sin.

Yes, there will an outward turn from committing sins,...

But it will always be accompanied by an inward repentance.

Repentance begins in the heart and ends in the hands.

Repentance is not doing something because the preacher says it is wrong.

Repentance is not doing something because your heart no longer desires to do it.

Repentance begins in the humiliation of the heart and ends in the reformation of your life.

In the same way that there is no repentance if the inside doesn't change...

There is also no repentance if the outside doesn't change as well.

Some people say that they could never repent for all their sin.

Well, the truth of repentance is that it isn't a covering of all your former sins.

You may have taken 10,000 steps away from God, but repentance begins with a single step toward him.

And that is why belief is so important.

You must turn to God as part of your repentance.

The Bible speaks of a worldly repentance, which is a false repentance.

It is possible to be sad over your sin, and never truly repent.

Judas was grieved that he betrayed Jesus, but he never turned to God because of that sadness.

It is possible to stop sinning, but never repent.

A turn from sin must be followed by a turn to God.

True repentance means placing your faith in God.

To believe in the gospel does not mean you only accept the facts about Jesus.

The Bible says that the demons believe the facts of the gospel.

True belief in the gospel is not simply saying the facts are true but also trusting that those facts can save you.

On the one hand, an unbeliever sees a roller coaster and says, “That ride looks safe. I don’t believe that anyone is falling off that ride.”

The believer says, “ That ride looks safe. Then jumps on and rides.”

True belief is seeing the facts and acting on it.

And true belief is always joined by true repentance.

And that is what Jesus requires for admission into the kingdom.

The truth is that every man is born outside God’s kingdom.

It is only through the rightful King that we have any hope.

And that rightful King is a willing king.

He doesn’t wish that any perish outside the kingdom but that all come to repentance.

And in that repentance, you become a citizen of the kingdom forever.

That is the promise of these verses.

The King had arrived in Mark 1.

He was near.

And right now is the time for getting into the kingdom.

As Jesus said in his first sermon in Galilee 2000 years ago, I say today, repent and believe the gospel.

Only then will you know the true King and have a place in the eternal Kingdom.

Conclusion

Let me close with a few principles from this text to take into the world...

First, the truth is often ridiculed.

Don't expect people to respond positively to the truth.

You be faithful to tell the truth about God.

But expect persecution and distress.

Second, the God's kingdom is the only kingdom.

Though we are yet to see the kingdom in all it's glory, the kingdom of God is all that matters.

What did Jesus say?

Seek first His kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you.

Kingdoms of the world rise and fall...

But God's kingdom is eternal.

Right now, Jesus reigns in the lives of his people, but one day he will reign over all the earth.

We are kingdom citizens, not worldly citizens.

Fill your time with kingdom work, not worldly work.

Am I saying quit your job?

Absolutely not!

I'm saying fill your spare time with the things of God not with the things of the world.

Last, listen to the King.

If our president called and said, "I want to speak at Pine Grove next week."

The next 6 days would be crazy.

Plans would be made.

TV stations would show up.

You would be telling your neighbors and inviting your family.

On Sunday, this place would be packed out.

And all of that former a world ruler.

Let me say something, the King of kings speaks here 3 times a week as we open and study His Word.

Let us be busy listening.

And today, he is saying to someone to repent and believe the gospel.

Let us pray....