



Life Is (Doing) Good: Sermon Study Notes

Week of Sunday, September 20, 2009

Mark 1:14-18

The Calling of the First Disciples

¹⁴After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

¹⁶As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out and make you fishers of people." ¹⁸At once they left their nets and followed him.

Questions:

- Verse 14 and 15 are a good summary of the very first teachings of Jesus during his public ministry. Read through these verses a few times. What words or phrases stand out to you? Why?
- What would you say is the tone of this message? It's content?
- In Jesus' day, the kingdom of God would have been thought of as a political reality, while some today think of it as a future state in heaven. It is best understood, Pastor Bryan suggests, not as a time or place, but as a kind of life – a life lived under the rule of God. How does this way of thinking affect our understanding about Jesus' message here? What are the implications for the way we think about our own lives if we are to 'enter into' the kingdom of God?
- What are the two conditions for our participation in the kingdom of God?
- "Repent" means turning away from one thing and turning towards something else. What are the things we might repent from? What has been your own experience?
- One commentator's definition of repent: "To turn away from what you're doing and embrace wholeheartedly what God is doing".
- "To Believe" doesn't just mean intellectual assent, it means to enter into something or to throw your whole self into something. Pastor Bryan used the illustration of flying as an example of what belief really looks like. How does that differ from the way we often think about belief?

- Immediately after calling his disciples to “repent and believe”, Jesus gives them a specific calling? What are the two parts of the call? (*Follow me and I will send you out to fish for people*) How would you characterize what he was asking of them when he said “Follow Me”? How would you characterize what he was asking of them when he said “I will make you fishers of me”?
- In what ways are these two requests specific to Simon and Andrew and in what ways are they relevant for everyone?
- When we become followers of Jesus, we join with him in his mission in the world. As Bryan put it “To live our lives for the sake of others.” Do you think it’s possible to truly repent and believe and *not* live on mission with God? Why or why not?
- Where does this passage challenge you? Are there deeper levels of repentance that you might need to experience? Pastor Bryan said there are at least two levels of repentance - repentance from sin as well as repentance from a life that is too small – one that fails to embrace a participation in God’s work in the world. Does this resonate with you?
- Which type of repentance is most needed for you personally right now? How would your life look different if you embraced this type of belief and repentance? *or* How has your life changed having embraced this type of belief and repentance?
- As you live together this year, pray for God to show you places in your world where you can join Him in His work. Spend some time praying about these things.