

Thine is the Kingdom
Week 2: Thy Will Be Done
Mark 1:14-15

Good morning. We're in week 2 of our series *Thine is the Kingdom* and our hope for these few weeks is that Jesus will lift our gaze from the chaos and craziness around us and fix our eyes on the everlasting, eternal Kingdom of God. And that, instead of being consumed by everything happening around us, we will anchor our hope in the Lord.

And so, to start this morning, I just want to ask you, is there anything in your life right now that feels a little chaotic and crazy? That's causing you some stress and anxiety. Maybe something's going on in the life of someone you love and it's eating you up that you can't do anything about it.

We want this space...both in terms of time and place...we want this to be a sanctuary. It's a time and place where we can bring those things to the Lord. A space where we can renew our hope in Him and He renews our strength to face the chaos and crazy in our lives. So, I want to give just a few moments as we begin for you to bring whatever it is for you and lay it down to Him. (Silence and prayer)

When we left off last week, Israel was crying out for a king. They looked at all the chaos and uncertainty around them and said, "We don't think we can trust God with the job anymore." So, they essentially took the rule and reign out of God's hands and tried to give it to someone else. And like I said last week, when we try to do things our own way, we typically take a bad situation and make it worse.

Sure enough, that's what happens. These kings who were supposed to unite Israel and bring stability only led them away further away from the Lord. Things just got more chaotic and uncertain. But, despite their unfaithfulness, God assures His people through prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah that He will send them a king who will reign with justice and restore Israel.

People hear this message and they start dreaming about a Messiah who will come as a political and military leader. A king who will overthrow foreign oppressors, rebuild the kingdom's glory, and reestablish Israel as a powerful nation. But, hundreds of years later, Israel finds itself under the oppression of Roman occupation. Instead of getting better, life just felt even more chaotic and crazy and out of their control. To make it worse, God seemed silent in the midst of it all. And they wonder, when will the Messiah arrive? When will the time come?

And it's in this cultural setting that we find our text for today. **Mark 1:14-15...(READ)**

The Messiah, this King that God promised, is finally here. It's the moment people have been waiting for. And I think these first words of Jesus give us an indication about who He is and what He actually came to do.

First, notice where Jesus is. Verse 14 says he went into Galilee. He didn't go to Jerusalem or Rome to make this announcement, he went to Galilee. This nowhere place filled with ordinary people. So, when Jesus announces his arrival, when he starts his ministry, he doesn't go to places and people of power and influence, he goes to people like you and me. He steps into the regular, ordinary lives of regular, ordinary people like us.

But, there's nothing regular or ordinary about his message. Mark says he came proclaiming the good news of God. The word used here is the word for Gospel. It's actually used twice in this passage. Gospel is a message of victory. It's a message meant to cause celebration, like news about a wedding or the birth of a child. If someone shared good news about something that happened, it was a gospel message. And this gospel message that Jesus is proclaiming is the good news of God because it's from God and brings us to God.

And so, Jesus goes to ordinary people whose lives feel a little chaotic and crazy and out of control, and he says, "I have good news for you." Verse 15...(READ vs. 15, end w/ "has come near.")

Jesus says, "The time has come. The moment you've been waiting for is finally HERE! The Kingdom of God has come near." What does that mean? What does it mean for the Kingdom of God to come near? Some would have heard it as the king they've been waiting for is here and he's bringing God's Kingdom, so watch out, Rome! We're coming for you. We're taking control again. God is about to rebuild His kingdom and reestablish Israel as a powerful nation.

But I don't think that's what Jesus has in mind. For Jesus, the Kingdom of God coming near was not about restoring Israel, it was about restoring people. It's not about God's rule and reign in a nation, but about God's rule and reign in us.

The good news of God is that we don't have to live in bondage to our sin anymore. We don't have to live under the oppression of our guilt and shame. The good news of God is that He is actively working to bring about His will on earth. That despite the chaos, brokenness, and injustice of our world, God is in control and His ultimate plan will prevail. So we can live with hope and confidence and peace.

Jesus says all these things that we long for, the time has come. It's here. He is bringing it to the world and he doesn't want anyone to miss it. How do we respond to that good news? Jesus tells us at the end of verse 15...(READ vs. 15b)

In other words, turn from whatever else you were doing because THIS is what matters most. You don't want to miss it! You'll want to be a part of what I'm going to do.

It kind of reminds me of how IU Football has taken Bloomington by storm. At the beginning of the year when we were predicted to be last, or next to last, in the Big 10 you could get tickets pretty easily. Chances are, most of us didn't think about building our Saturdays around watching IU Football. We just made plans and thought, "I'll catch the game if I'm able to or watch highlights." People weren't paying much attention.

A couple of months later, it's THE ticket to have! The stadium is packed. People want to be a part of it, even if it means changing their plans.

In a way, that's what's happening here. Jesus is saying, "You don't want to miss this!" God is doing something completely new. Turn away from everything else you were doing because THIS is so much bigger and better!

You see, by making this announcement about the Kingdom of God being near, Jesus doesn't want us to just know something, He wants us to DO something. He calls people to repent and believe the good news. That word "repent" it just means to turn around. To move in a different direction. **Repentance is a radical change of mind and perspective.** You were going one way, now go another. You were thinking one way, not think another.

And it's interesting, Jesus doesn't tell us what to turn from. So, I think it's this open invitation to turn away from anything in our lives that doesn't align with the Kingdom of God. Turn away from our preoccupations, whether it's a preoccupation with ourselves or our sin, or even if it's something good. Jesus invites us to turn away from what we were doing, where we were going, and turn towards God. To have a new preoccupation. A new allegiance. A new direction in life.

And so, he doesn't just call us away from something, He also calls us to something. Jesus invites us to "...believe the good news!" This isn't just about holding to a set of doctrines or beliefs. Jesus invites us to live by faith and trust in the Lord. To open ourselves up to His rule and reign in us. And what we see here is that repentance and belief are not two different actions. They're one fluid motion. It's turning from one direction to start moving in another.

Jesus is saying that, because the Kingdom of God is near, our response is to turn from going our own way and doing our own thing and start moving in his direction. And this is not a one-time thing. These two verbs are indicate and ongoing process, meaning, we don't just do them once and then never have to do it again. Repentance is an ongoing process of turning away from our direction and back to God. Belief is an ongoing process of putting our trust and faith in God, walking in His ways.

For followers of Jesus, **repentance and belief are ongoing rhythms of life.** So, how do we live life with Jesus? We repent and believe, repent and believe, repent and believe. It's like breathing. It's our way of life. We turn away from our own preoccupations and turn to Jesus.

Turn away from our own desires to rule and reign and call the shots in our lives and allow Jesus to have His way in us.

When we do, we find ourselves living in the Kingdom of God. We no longer say, “My will be done” because we’re too busy praying, “Thy will be done in me.” Instead of fighting for our own way, we surrender our wills to the will of God and we walk in His ways that are made clear to us in Scripture. Ways that we see Jesus live out in his life and ministry.

So, Jesus’ message is that the time has come. The Kingdom of God is near. And it’s a radical message, not because of what he wants us to know, but because of what he wants us to do. Jesus’ invitation is to a whole new way of life. It’s to a radical change of mind and perspective and actions. Simply put, **following Jesus is disruptive.**

You see, when you choose to follow Jesus, you’re choosing not to follow your own way anymore. You’re not doing your own thing and just asking God to bless it. A life lived in the Kingdom of God is not about getting your ticket to Heaven punched and then living however you want until you get there.

A life of repentance and belief means you’re moving in a completely different direction. You’re choosing to die to yourself daily, take up your cross, and follow Jesus. It’s going His way in your life, becoming who He wants you to become. It’s leaving behind your old way of life to follow Jesus. It’s a radical invitation, and it’s meant to be disruptive because you’re not following your own way anymore, you’re following Jesus.

So, Jesus doesn’t want us to just know that the Kingdom of God is near, He wants us to live differently because of it. He wants us to repent and believe the good news. To turn from the direction we were going and to live in this new reality. And I wonder today what this might look like in your life?

Like, what would it look like for Jesus to disrupt your calendar? To get in there and start messing with how you use your time? Would you prioritize things differently?

What would it look like for Jesus to disrupt your bank account? Would you spend your money differently when you really believe that it all belongs to Him and He wants you to use it the way He would use it?

What would it look like for Jesus to disrupt your job? Would you discover that your job is not just about yourself and your own advancement, but a way for you to glorify God in the way you work and treat others?

What would it look like for Jesus to disrupt your thought life, your sex life, your family life? In fact, this week, I challenge you to pray, “Lord, disrupt some aspect of my life so I can live more devoted to you.”

You see, there is no part of your life that Jesus does not want to mess with when you start following Him. Following Jesus is disruptive...but it's totally worth it. It's totally worth it because Jesus is totally worth it. And the Kingdom of God is totally worth it.

So, repent and believe the good news. And then do it again. And do it again. And do it again in every aspect of your life. And as you do, you will walk in the will of God and find the joy of living in His Kingdom. We're going to move into a time where we get to practice this now.

Communion: Every time we take it, we proclaim the good news that Jesus made a way for us to be a part of the Kingdom of God. Through faith in His life, death, and resurrection, we are forgiven and set free from our old way of life. Communion is a reminder and a declaration that we have turned from who we used to be and are now walking a new life in Christ.

Baptism: Dying to ourself, our ways, and taking up new life in Jesus.