

# The Gospel According To Mark

## Part Four

**Mark 1:14-15** [New King James] *“Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.’”*

John the Baptist’s message of repentance and baptism had come to an end, the time for Jesus Christ’s message to begin.

Jesus Christ’s message is **not** identical to John’s.

John came preaching about a time to come.

Jesus Christ preached that the time had come.

John preached a baptism of repentance.

Jesus Christ preached that the Kingdom of God had come, so believe that gospel message.

John did **not** preach the gospel message but that the gospel bearer was coming.

**There is in this gospel message the good news that God had fulfilled His promises to Israel by sending the Messiah, the Anointed One, to save the people.**

**As a whole, however, the nation of Israel rejected Jesus Christ as the Messiah, because He did not fit the commonly accepted profile of what the Messiah should do.**

**The Messiah was expected to lead the Jews to victory over Roman occupation forces and restore the nation to a place of dominance in the world, as it held in the days of King Solomon the son of King David.**

**Jesus Christ showed no signs of becoming such a Messiah.**

Even John the Baptist finally began to wonder whether Jesus was really the One sent by God, [Matthew 11:3].

**The Messiah God sent was different from the One the people expected, because God’s purpose in the world was different from what the people expected.**

The people expected God to vanquish their enemies, as He had done in the past, and make their nation great.

But God’s purpose was to make a new covenant with all people, **not** just Israel, who had been in the past chosen to be a model nation.

**God also wanted to write His laws in the hearts of all people, [Jeremiah 31:31-34].**

**The good news that Jesus brought was the truth about God, [Galatians 2:5; Colossians 1:5].**

**Until Jesus Christ came, humans could only guess and grope after God, even Job recognised this problem, [Job 23:3-7].**

**John 14:7-11** [New King James] *“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.” Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, “Show us the Father”? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.’”*

**When we see Jesus Christ, what He said and did, we know how God the Father reacts.**

The good news that Jesus Christ brought was the promise of God’s grace.

**All non-Christian religions think of a demanding God, a god of threats, rather than a God of promises.**

Only Christianity tells of God who is more ready to give than we are to ask.

The good news Jesus brought was of salvation, [**Ephesians 1:13**].

Salvation that is **not** just a negative thing, it is positive.

Not simply liberation from the penalty of our sins, it is the power to live life victoriously and to conquer sin, and receive the gift of eternal life as a created child of God in His Kingdom.

**The keys to receiving all this good news in our life, is found in two words:**

**Repent** – the Greek word “*mētanoēō*” which literally means a change of mind.

Repentance is more than being sorry for the consequences of sin, it is sorry for sin, which is rebellion against our loving God, [**Psalms 51:4**].

**Believe** – the Greek word “*pistēuō*” meaning to have faith in a person or a thing. **To entrust our spiritual wellbeing to Jesus Christ and the message He brought from God the Father.**

**John 3:16-17** [New King James] *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”*

This is the God that Jesus told us about, Who so loves all humanity that He is willing to make any sacrifice to reconcile all humans to Himself.

We are to believe this is true even if it sounds too good to be true.

**This is what we are to have faith in!**

**Mark 1:16-20** [New King James] *“And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’ They immediately left their nets and followed Him. When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.”*

**It is very interesting to study the men whom Jesus Christ picked out as His first followers.**

**We must notice what they were –**

They were simple folk, they did not have a college education nor were they part of the ecclesiastics or aristocracy, they were neither learned or wealthy, they were hard working fishermen, [Acts 4:13].

**We must notice what they were doing when Jesus Christ called them –**

They were doing their normal day's work, they were catching fish and mending nets.

**The prophet Amos was a previous example of a man who was going about his normal work when called by God to do a job of work, [Amos 7:14-15].**

**We must notice how Jesus Christ called them –**

Jesus Christ's summons was a simple "follow me."

No doubt they had stood in the crowd and listened to what Jesus Christ had preached. Most likely they had stayed to talk with Jesus Christ after the rest of the crowd had drifted away. No doubt they already had felt the magnetism of His presence.

**It was because they trusted Jesus Christ that they followed Him.**

This was **not** a matter of choice, only a foolish son would run off after an itinerant preacher instead of maintaining the family business and ensuring the care and security of his parents and siblings.

**The impact that Jesus Christ had on them must have been well-known by the family.**

This was a matter of trust, they trusted Jesus Christ.

**Only in the light of trust can we see clearly that there is really no choice at all but to follow Jesus Christ.**

**John 12:32** [New King James] *"And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."*

The greatest number of people follow Jesus Christ, not because of what He said, but because of everything that He did and who He is, obedience to His words comes later.

**We must note what Jesus Christ offered them –**

**He offered them a job of work, to a life of serving other people.**

Jesus Christ called them to a task in which they would have to spend themselves and burn themselves up and in the end, die for His sake and for the sake of their fellow human beings.

**He called them to a task where they could only win something for themselves by giving their all to Him and to other human beings.**

**This in the end was done out of gratitude for what Jesus Christ was going to do for all humanity, that included them.**

**Romans 12:1** [NIV] *"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship."*

The Greek word translated "*bodies*" is "*soma*" meaning whole life, physical body, mind and human spirit, [Job 32:8; 1 Corinthians 2:11; Proverbs 20:27].

To follow Jesus Christ is **not** a one hour one day a week but a total surrender of our whole being.

**Matthew 6:33** [New King James] *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”*

**Our trust in Jesus Christ must take first place in our lives, every day.**

**Luke 14:25-27** [New King James] *“Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.’”*

The Greek word translated “hate” is “*misēō*” meaning to love less by comparison.

**Mark 1:21-22** [New King James] *“Then they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”*

**The teachers of the law did not speak with their own authority, they would preface their comments with the saying of some past rabbi, even the prophets rightly attributed their pronouncements to “thus says the Lord.”**

**Jesus simply said “I say unto you.”**

Here was a man who spoke with His own authority and **not** in the name of another.

**That alone was amazing, but Jesus Christ then demonstrated His authority.**

**Mark 1:23-28** [New King James] *“Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, saying, ‘Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are, the Holy One of God!’ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, ‘Be quiet, and come out of him!’ And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him. Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, ‘What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.’ And immediately His fame spread throughout all the region around Galilee.”*

**When a demon-possessed man disrupted the meeting, Jesus Christ simply ordered the demon to leave, and it did.**

**John 1:1-3, 14** [New King James] *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” ... “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

**Jesus Christ as God, did have all the authority in the world, in the universe, for all things came into existence through Him.**

So even these spirits who had turned evil under the influence of Satan, although Jesus Christ allowed them to exist, they were completely subject to Him.

**The people in the synagogue were amazed, they had never seen anything like this before.**

Who could have such authority that at His word these evil spirits obeyed!

Jesus Christ who has all authority used it in an entirely different way than most people use their limited authority.

**Jesus took action only when necessary –**

He did not stifle normal living by trying to prevent all possibility of something going wrong. He simply dealt with the problem decisively when it arose.

**Jesus did not overreact –**

**Jesus simply made the evil spirit depart to stop the interruption of what He was teaching.**

**Jesus did not make a big show of the occasion –**

All the noise and shouting came from the demon who recognised Who Jesus Christ was.

Jesus Christ used His authority to serve **not** to be served, and that is how He wants us to use any authority we may have, [Mark 10:42-45].

**Jesus Christ does not overpower us with His authority, He serves us with patience and mercy, helping us grow to see just how much we need Him, as Saviour and Lord.**