

# What Did Jesus Christ Teach?

**Mark 1:14-15** [NIV] *“After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”*

What an astonishing entry onto the scene by this thirty-year-old carpenter.

The cousin of Jesus, John the Baptist, dressed like one of the ancient prophets of Israel, brought a similar message to this.

John told the people to stop playing with religion, to repent, that is to change their whole attitude to life.

As an outward sign of this change they were to be baptised, in the muddy waters of the Jordan.

This was a very radical step for the Jews with their legalistic form of religion.

John also made it very clear that what He was doing was only a preparation for the coming of God’s Messiah, God’s anointed one, Jesus Christ.

**The heart of the message that Jesus Christ brought was the Kingdom of God, so it is important that we grasp what this means.**

To the people of Palestine at that time, who were under the oppressive rule of the Romans, the words Kingdom of God meant release from Roman rule, that would bring justice, hope and freedom.

So the term “*Kingdom of God*” was packed with power and captured the attention of most people.

The only exceptions were the religious leaders who had a “*good deal*” with the Romans that allowed them to exercise limited power over the common people.

The Kingdom of God basically means “*the rule of God*” our being subject to God’s sovereign rule.

The problem is that all of us are subject to our human nature, that rebels against God’s rule in our lives and wants to “*paddle our own canoe*”.

This desire to “*do our own thing*” was implanted in our nature from the beginning by Satan.

**Genesis 3:1-5** [NIV] *“Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’” “You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*

This desire to be “*like God*” was mis-implied by Satan as to the ultimate reason for the creation of Adam and Eve as the first human beings.

**Genesis 1:26-28** [NIV] *“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”*

God shows in this statement that His deepest desire is to have children who are created in His image and likeness.

Undoubtedly this had been explained to Adam and Eve, so when Satan said he was showing them an easy way to become “*like God*” Eve then Adam took it “*hook, line and sinker*”.

This would allow them to do it “*their way*”, the easy way, instead of a life-long commitment to obeying their Creator.

What Adam and Eve, followed by deceived human beings ever since, had overlooked was the two stages of this initial desire of God the Father to have children.

Let us re-read that scripture in **Genesis 1:26-28**.

Notice that the original statement involved “*image and likeness*” while the following physical creation was **only** “*image*”.

The two Hebrew words used have completely different meanings.

“**Image**” means a shadow of the real thing not the substance.

All humans are created in the “*image*” of God and this makes each of us very special and of great importance to our Creator God.

“**Likeness**” means, two for one, son, manner, it is talking about character.

**Until we take on the very character of God we are an incomplete creation in God’s eyes.**

**A kingdom is only a family that has grown big.**

So the second meaning is the ultimate goal of the first meaning, a family of human beings who have been transformed into humans who are in God’s “*likeness*”, His character.

**What one word sums up the character of God?**

**1 John 4:8** [NIV] “*Whoever does not love does not know God, because **God is love.***”

Love, and this is a very special kind of love.

The Greek word is “*agapé*” – a spontaneous love, irrespective of the rights or response of the person receiving this love.

**A sacrificial love where our selfish desires are sacrificed in order to show this love to others.**

Constantly Jesus Christ spoke of this love, but much more showed it by the way He conducted His life day-by-day.

**The just and perfect rule in the Kingdom of God is encapsulated in this one word, love.**

**Romans 13:8-10** [NIV] “*Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, **for he who loves his fellow-man has fulfilled the law.** The commandments, “Do not commit adultery,” “Do not murder,” “Do not steal,” “Do not covet,” and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” Love does no harm to its neighbour. **Therefore love is the fulfilment of the law.***”

Love, “*agapé*” love fulfils all of the laws in the Kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to condense all the laws of God’s Kingdom into this one word.

**John 15:9-13** [NIV] *“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. **Greater love has no-one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.**”*

Jesus taught that this “*agapé*” love was one of self-sacrifice.

**This love is impossible for human beings to fulfil under our own power.**

But be encouraged there is a way we can be filled with the love and express this love at all times.

**John 15:1-8** [NIV] *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. **No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine.** Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. **“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.** If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”*

Our lives must be joined to that of the resurrected Jesus Christ if we are to bear any fruits.

Note it is this bearing of fruit that shows that we are disciples of Jesus Christ, Christians.

**Galatians 5:22-23** [NIV] *“But the **fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.** Against such things there is no law.”*

Note the first and major “*fruit of the Holy Spirit*” is love [agapé love].

**John 14:15** [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command.”*

Love and obey Jesus Christ.

The word translated “*love*” – is “*agapaō*” from the root word “*agan*” meaning a passionate love in a social and moral sense.

What Jesus Christ is saying is “*passionately seek my presence and submit to what I say.*”

This we can do on a physical, human level.

If we take this step Jesus Christ promises that something supernatural will happen in our lives.

**John 14:16-18** [NIV] *“And **I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth.** The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. **I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.**”*

Who is this “*counsellor*” the “*spirit of truth*”?

**John 16:12-13** [NIV] *“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the **Spirit of truth**, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.”*

The Holy Spirit that Christ will send, is the spirit that leads us into all truth.

How can I say this is the Holy Spirit?

**John 16:14-15** [NIV] *“He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.”*

The Holy Spirit will be speaking to us the very words of Jesus Christ.

**John 14:6** [NIV] *“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.”*

Jesus Christ is the “truth”.

**How will the Holy Spirit cause this fruit of love [agapé love] to mature in our lives?**

**John 16:5-11** [NIV] *“Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.”*

The Holy Spirit will convict us into taking three steps in our lives.

Convict us through a feeling of guilt in our conscience of the enormity of **sin** by believing what Jesus Christ the Son of God had to do to free us of its penalty.

Show us what true **righteousness** is, **not** our own self-righteousness, but the righteousness of the perfect life of Jesus Christ being credited to us through faith in Him [**read Romans 4:13-25**].

Prepare us for the **judgement** we all will have to face, when we receive from Jesus Christ our reward based on how we conducted our lives [**read Matthew 25:31-46**].

**John 14:17** [NIV] *“the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.”*

**Note the two stages of receiving the Holy Spirit.**

“With you” the Holy Spirit will begin to work alongside us to help us.

Then if we let Him the Holy Spirit will dwell “in us”, literally take over the directing of our lives.

It is this very intimate union with the Holy Spirit that will allow the very “fruit” of that union to be developed in us.

Remember the major “fruit” is agapé love, the very sacrificial love of our Creator God.

This is the message Jesus Christ taught, and how we are to become created children of God who are in His “image and likeness”.

I have only scratched the surface of this message but I hope I have given you a desire to know more and live by what we learn.