

永恒的福音呼召——马可福音 1:14-20 The Eternal Gospel Call—Mark 1:14-20

Introduction, outline

- Scripture reading: Mark 1:14-20; John 1:35-42; Luke 5:1-11.
- Teaching text (Mark 1:14-20, NASB95):

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

16 As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. **17** And Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” **18** Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. **19** Going on a little farther, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who were also in the boat mending the nets. **20** Immediately He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away to follow Him.

- Mark records this calling of disciples right after Jesus’ preaching of the gospel to show the close connection between evangelism and discipleship. Evangelism and discipleship were the focus of Jesus’ ministry from the beginning. It is also the mission of the church today – Jesus is still issuing the eternal gospel call through the church today.

- Outline :

Title : The Eternal Gospel Call

1. The Preaching of the Gospel (vv 14-15)

1a. The Manner of Preaching

Public Proclamation with Authority

1b. The Message Preached

One Fact: God’s Kingdom Is Near!

One Command: Repent and Believe!

2. The Calling of Gospel Workers (vv 16-20)

2a. Recipient of the Call: Lowly Sinners

2b. Requirement of the Call: Follow Jesus

2c. Result of the Call: To Become Fishers of Men

2d. Response to the Call: Immediate Obedience

The Preaching of the Gospel (vv 14-15)

- “Jesus came into Galilee” : The center of Jesus’ early ministry is in Galilee. It is a province in the northernmost region of Israel. It is so remote that it is despised by some Jews. (John 7:41)

“The fact that Jesus launched His ministry in full power in Galilee was in itself a rebuke to the apostasy and corruption that existed in Jerusalem at that time.”——One Scholar

Isaiah 9:1-2“in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make *it* glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them.”——The great light to be seen in Galilee, as prophesied in the OT, is indeed Jesus Christ.

- “preaching” : The term originally refers to the kind of proclamation uttered by the heralds of a king who proclaims the coming of the king or the message of the king in the name of the king. It is a loud, public proclamation with authority and power. So it should be with the proclamation from the pulpit in Christ's church today.
- “ the gospel of God”: God Himself will come to earth to save His people from their enemies and to establish a righteous kingdom (Isaiah 40).
- “The time is fulfilled”: The verb implies that the time has been predetermined by God. God has preordained history, so that when the fullness of time comes, all prophecies will be fulfilled exactly according to God’s plan (Galatians 4:4-5). The timing of the messianic prophecy in Daniel 9:25 can be calculated to the exact date when properly interpreted.
- “the kingdom of God is at hand”: Perfect tense, same with “the time is fulfilled.” Not that it *will* be fulfilled or is *coming near*. The perfect tense means the time *has been* fulfilled and the kingdom of God is *right in front of you!* Why? Because the King is here!

Application : It is the same today. Jesus’ authority has come in the form of gospel proclamation upon everyone who hears it. The kingdom of God has come to wherever the gospel is proclaimed. To everyone who hears the gospel, Jesus’ authority has come upon you through the gospel message. You either accept it or reject it, and there is no other choice. Acceptance means total submission to His kingship and receive His blessings. Rejection means that you will face the result of total destruction by Him.

- “repent and believe in the gospel”: The previous sentence is the gospel fact and this is the command based on the fact. Not an invitation, but a command. Not “you may choose to repent,” but “repent and believe in the gospel!” Not “it is a good thing to believe in Jesus, you get to have eternal life, consider it, Jesus invites you to receive eternal life,” but a direct command without wiggle room for anyone. Everyone who hears the gospel has a responsibility to repent and believe in the gospel.

Just like the two sides of the same coin, one cannot exist without the other. Repentance is turning away from sin and faith is turning to God. The two aspects of turning away and turning to must necessarily work together to complete a turn.

Repentance can be defined as a change of mind that is so radical that it brings about a change of life. “*No one giggles through the narrow gate, but all who enter come mourning over their sin.*”——One pastor

Genuine repentance must necessarily involve genuine faith. Otherwise, conviction of sin can only crush you without giving you any motivation to change. But what does the gospel say? “Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.” (Isaiah 1:18) It is indeed the promise of complete forgiveness in the gospel message that enables people to truly repent and trust in God.

The Calling of Gospel Workers (vv 16-20)

- “Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John”: These two pairs of brothers already knew Jesus at this time. Their first meeting with Jesus is recorded in John 1:35-42 when they were disciples of John the Baptist, so they had already received the baptism of repentance and were waiting for the coming of the kingdom of God. Upon hearing John’s testimony regarding Jesus, they immediately started to follow Jesus. Now, the call here recorded in Mark happened more than half a year later.
- “casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen”: As professional fishermen, their main job is fishing on the sea. It is pure physical labor requiring a good amount of skills. When casting a net, the fisherman would hold the net in one hand and throw out the weighty edge of the net evenly with the other hand in order to open the net as wide as possible, while holding a thread to close the net with. As the net sinks, it catches fish, and the fishmen closes the net and pulls it up to the boat. This is their repeated action day by day in order to make a living.
- “Follow me”: The command of the call. It is essentially no different from the call to “repent and believe in the gospel”. The message of the gospel is that Jesus is the king of the kingdom of God, so to “repent and believe in the gospel” is to submit to His kingship, to learn and obey His will, and to live according to His teaching. Essentially, following Jesus is the basic sign of a saving faith.
- “I will make you become fishers of men”: The promise of the call. A brand new career. You will not catch fish, but men. This is a call to full-time ministry, so they need to “leave their nets” to follow Him.

Why would anyone want this career? To become fishers of men? Because the desire of God’s people is not just personal salvation, but the whole kingdom of God. Psalms contain some of the most personal expression of emotions, and yet they are full of petitions for God’s kingdom and for God’s people. (cf Psalm 16:3)

How to become fishers of men? How to cast this net? Healing the sick? Casting out demons? Fighting wars? They don’t know yet. So Jesus didn’t send them out immediately to cast the net, but asked them to *follow Him*. He will *train them*. Just like the skill of casting fishnet, the

skill of catching men also comes from learning. After training, the disciples learned that the net of the kingdom is to be cast mainly by proclaiming the gospel.

Application: How do you know if you are called to full-time ministry? Three basic principles:

1) God will make you desire His kingdom work above all other things, so that no secular job will satisfy you at all; 2) You must have a progressively sanctified life as you follow Jesus; 3) You must have affirmation from mature spiritual leaders in the church, especially of your gift for service. If you aren't called to full-time ministry, the way for you to become a fisher of men is to commit yourself to a local church that faithfully proclaims God's Word and to serve one another and live out your testimony.

- “Immediately they left their nets”: Some say this shows the power of Jesus' words that directly overcomes man's sin nature that they cannot do otherwise. But from a human perspective, Jesus' call can be rejected. (Matthew 22:14; Mark 10:17-22) The reason why the disciples obeyed immediately is not only because of the external call of Jesus' words, but also the internal call of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. Their obedience was not against their own will as if they did something that they had no idea why they did it. Instead, they are enabled to obey willingly from the heart because the Holy Spirit opened their eyes to see how precious the call is.

However, in Luke 5:1-11 (obviously another calling event), they picked up their fishing nets again and went back to their old career. The disciples are weak and prone to change, but Jesus said: I will make you fishers of men. Just watch and see how I will change your life.

1 Corinthians 1: 27-29 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God.

Application: Many people like to use testimonies of celebrities for evangelism, as if the testimony of movie stars are somehow more persuasive. The real persuasive evidence is what Jesus did to these fishermen!

Summary : After Jesus' resurrection and before His ascension, Jesus called Peter again: ‘**You follow me!**’ (John 21:22) Was Peter to follow Jesus immediately up to heaven? No. Follow my teaching, follow my life, follow my example of service, that's the meaning of following me. I will lead you your whole life through. Though I ascend to heaven, I will send the Holy Spirit to lead you. You follow me to do the things I called you to do. Though I will not be by your side physically, you must know that I will lead you. Follow me, and I will use you to build my kingdom.

What about you?