

Mark 1 – Five Points

by Peter Walker

#1: (Mark 1:1-5) Repentance was ‘preparation’ for the coming of Jesus: John the Baptist was sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus, and the way he did it was calling people to repent of their sins, and mark this ‘turnaround’ by being publicly baptized. It had been prophesied that this ‘messenger’ would come (Mal 3:1), and Jesus himself said that John the Baptist was the ‘Elijah’ to come again. (cf Mt 11:14, fulfilling the last prophecy of the Old Testament, Mal 4:5-6)

Note: Repentance prepared the road for Christ, and was also part of Christ’s own message. (Mark 1:15) Repentance still prepares the way for Jesus, and is still called for by Jesus. (Acts 3:19)

#2: (Mark 1:7-8) Repentance is the beginning, not the end, of the message of Jesus! John the Baptist clearly states in these verses that what is coming after him, is more ‘powerful’. Repentance is good, deep, necessary, but it is ‘done’ and marked by water baptism. It ‘prepares the way’. For what? Well, for the more ‘powerful’, as John says. (vs.7) Jesus comes with more power, and is the ‘point’ of all repentance. ***Repentance prepares, Jesus ‘finishes’.*** (cf John 19:30/Ps 22:31) And the ‘mark’ of coming to and being with Jesus is not done with water, but with the Holy Spirit. (vs.8)

Note: Repentance is something we need as a ‘way of life’ (see Matthew 3:8), but our focus, the point of repentance, is to be with Christ. Don’t linger and languish in a worldly sorrow. When you repent, walk free, and ‘be’ the new and redeemed you that Christ paid for. (Rev 5:9; Is 49:16) The repentance that Christ gives, ‘leaves no regret’ (2 Cor 7:10)

#3: (Mark 1:11) God quotes the bible! Jesus often quoted the bible (see Matthew 4:1-11, and Luke 20:17-18, and many more occasions!) But here, God quotes himself! See Mark 1:11 and Isaiah 42:1.

Note: We need to read the bible regularly – daily. We need to read it methodically (maybe 1 chapter a day), so as to learn the history of God’s character through his acts, his teaching, his people. If God and Christ quote the scriptures, surely we need to know – and quote and/or reference – the scriptures!

#4: (Mark 1:15) Jesus is the ‘good news’.

‘The time has come,’ he said. ‘The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!’ (Mark 1:15)

If you look carefully at this scripture – and bearing in mind how Christ so often shielded his own truth (*Mark 1:25, Pr 25:2, Mt 16:20, Mt 13:44, Is 6:9*) – it is important to note the detail. ***‘The time has come...’*** This is an ‘arrival’ point. Jesus is saying the time is here, I am here, God is here! (*Is 7:14, Mt 1:23*) So when Jesus goes on to say that the Kingdom of God has ‘come near’, I believe we are to press in here and see that the Kingdom of God had actually come – i.e. *‘the time has come’*. (see *Matthew 20:18*) Jesus goes on to say, *‘Repent and believe the good news!’* (vs.15b) Repentance was preparation, as we have seen, not the actual ‘time come’. So here Jesus is pairing, coupling the ‘repentance’ – i.e. the preparation – with the prize, the presence and revelation of *‘God with us.’* The good news is not the repentance, but that sins can now be forgiven here on earth. (see *Luke 5:24*) This forgiveness of sins is the ‘harder’ thing to do, according to Jesus. (*Luke 5:24*) Why? Because it cannot happen without his own shedding of blood. (*Heb 9:22*) You can repent without the shedding of blood, but your repentance has no forgiveness, no ‘arrival’ or redemption, without the shedding of blood. The good news is the forgiveness of sins, and ‘God with us.’ (*Mt 1:23; Jn 17:3*) The good news is Jesus Christ himself – the King of Kings not only in heaven, but here on earth (increasingly – *Mt 6:9-13*), and now in your heart! (*Col 1:27*)

Note: The ‘pressing in’ to really ‘see’ Jesus, is a principle we are called to, and rewarded for doing. If you have some time, look up and consider these scriptures: Jeremiah 29:13, Isaiah 6:9, 2 Chronicles 15:15, Genesis 32:22-32 (note vs.26), Matthew 15:21-28, Mark 14:1-9, Matthew 20:29-34, John 20:11-18, Hebrews 11:6.

#5: (*Mark 1:17*) Coming to Christ is the message of the Kingdom of God. I believe the ‘good news’ being Jesus is reinforced right here in verse 17 after that critical verse 15 above. Jesus calls Andrew to follow him, and says that in doing so, he will catch others. To follow Christ, is to enter into the good news. To come to Christ, is to be forgiven, and saved forever. To come to Christ is to access the good news of God, and to find a new purpose. What purpose? Well, to ‘catch other men’ for Christ. The good news is coming to Christ, and the call of Christ is to bring others to him. Here, as noted above, the King of Kings, comes to ‘King’ the earth, and also ‘reign’ in your heart. Jesus, King of heaven, King of the earth, and King of your heart. This is the Kingdom of God!

Note: Every aspect of life comes from Christ. (Acts 17:25, Ps 24:1, Ps 50:10, Ez 18:4, Gen 1:27, Jn 10:34, Ps 82:6, Mt 5:45) However, the ‘kingdom’ here is one of darkness. It is a defeated kingdom of darkness (Jn 16:11), but it is here. For this reason, to bring the name of Jesus and the power of Jesus with faith to any corner of this dark world, and in any word, deed or deposit that the Spirit fills, is to bring the ‘Kingdom of God’ – i.e. the presence and aroma of Christ – to and through the kingdom of darkness. So ‘conversions’ to Christ are not the only aspect of bringing the Kingdom of God to earth. Every ray of light you bring in Jesus’ name is beautiful, powerful, eternal! However, we can so quickly

substitute the King for his Kingdom, lose the man in the midst of his power and blessings. This is to lose our 'first love', and it is to lose the whole point of the Kingdom itself: the King! (Rev 2:1-5; Jn 5:39-40)

Bless you as you crown Jesus King of your heart, follow him, and 'catch' others!
(Mark 1:17)