

The Message of Christ

April 5, 2020

after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, ¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” – Mark 1:14-15 NKJV

And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; ¹⁸ they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” – Mark 16:15-18 NKJV

(The Message of Christ)

INTRODCTION: Our text verses come from the Gospel of Mark today. Mark is the briefest of the Gospels, and Mark is a narrative written primarily for the Gentile world. In Mark, we see few parables and long discourses. This is a book, recording the actions and the mission of Jesus, so words like “straightway, and immediately”, from the Greek word “euthus”, appear more than 40 times. As such, Mark illustrates the message and the mission of Christ through his deeds. **(READ TEXT and comment)**

REPENT AND BELIEVE: If you have a red-letter edition of the Bible, you’ll see that Mark 1:15 are the very first words of Jesus in Mark’s Gospel and Mark 16:15-18 are the very last words of Jesus in his Gospel. Sandwiched between these two brief verses are all his message!

THE MESSAGE DIDN’T CHANGE!

***To the general audience**, to all the people who came to him (zealous religious factions in Israel, the Roman soldiers, and curiosity seekers), the simple message is the same that John delivered. I like how Paul put it to the Corinthians and the Ephesians:

For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. – 2 Corinthians 6:2 NKJV

*Testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.
Acts 20:21 NKJV*

***Paul, Peter, James, Stephen, and all the rest of the New Testament teach faith, repentance, water baptism, and the Holy Ghost** for people who must be reconciled to Him (to God). This also has to be the message of the church!

***GOD has not changed**, the **MESSAGE** of Christ has not changed, **SIN** has not changed, **HUMAN NATURE** has not changed, and **THE CHURCH** cannot afford to change from the scriptural mandates!

***If the church has nothing to preach besides philosophy and politics**, we have made ourselves irrelevant. We have nothing more to give the world. Why? Because the world already has enough philosophers, politicians, and celebrities with a mission, but their missions are not the same as ours.

***This world needs to see Jesus!** This world needs to see Christ in you, the hope of glory. They need to see righteousness, peace and joy through an Apostolic, Holy Ghost filled Christian who is unafraid to echo the message of Christ!

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Romans 6:23 NKJV

SINS OF THE PRESENT DAY

We live in a society that has largely forgotten its Christian heritage. A few decades ago, people in the United States shared a common understanding of morality and virtue. We agreed upon and essentially complied with certain standards of acceptable behavior. But today, we have not only forgotten God in our schools, in our courts and in legislation, but in our families and in our hearts!

***The abortions of unborn children**, even in the 2nd and 3rd trimesters, take place in the thousands per day.

*The news media, the social media, private and Government institutions all have their own agendas, **so it's hard to even know truth:**

For 2014, the Guttmacher Institute reported 926,200 abortions, an abortion rate of 14.6 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 years. The CDC reported 652,639 abortions and an abortion rate of 19.3. The Guttmacher Institute is an independent non-profit organization that is pro-choice and was a part of Planned Parenthood until 2007. The CDC is a Federal Agency reporting under the Department of Health and Human Services. Their basis for estimates aren't identical, but neither are their motives and neither are their numbers.

WHAT IS TRUTH? When Jesus stood before Pilate in judgment, before he went to the cross, he said *"Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."*

Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all. – John 18:38 NKJV

***Pilate heard so many conflicting stories and perhaps he had misrepresented the truth so many times, that he no longer knew how to define the truth.** Truth for him, like for so many of others, is what you want it to be. Truth is defined by the people you listen to and by what you want to hear.

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! ²¹ Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight! ²² Woe to men mighty at drinking wine, Woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink, ²³ Who justify the wicked for a bribe, And take away justice from the righteous man! – Isaiah 5:20-23 NKJV

THE VIOLATION OF GOD’S TRUTH EVENTUALLY RESULTS IN JUDGMENT. We can deny it, pretend it is not there, or rebel against it. **But none of that changes the message!**

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Romans 6:23 NKJV

And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; ¹⁸ they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” – Mark 16:15-18 NKJV

EPILOG

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? – Romans 10:14-15 NKJV

“Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him [against God].”

¹⁶ *These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage. ¹⁷ But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: ¹⁸ how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.*

¹⁹ *These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.*

²⁰ *But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,*
²¹ *keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto*
eternal life. - Jude 14-21 NKJV