

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL FEBRUARY 16, 2016

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SCRIPTURE

MARK 1:14-28

14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

16 As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. 17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." 18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him. 19 As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. 20 Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

21 They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. 22 They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. 23 Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, 24 and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." 25 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" 26 And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. 27 They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." 28 At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

DEVOTIONAL

I love the Common English Bible translation of verse 15. It says, "Now is the time! Here comes God's Kingdom! Change your hearts and lives, and trust this good news." As we go through Lent it should be a time of preparation for what comes at Easter. We should have the urgency that is evident in verse 15. Now is the time. Not in five minutes or whenever it's convenient for us, but now. Our excitement at the ushering of God's Kingdom into the here and now changes our hearts and lives as we trust this good news.

We should continually ask, "What is God doing in my life and in the lives of those around me? Where and how is God acting?" When we get the answer to the question, we need to respond with the same urgency and excitement that we read about in verse 15. God has great things in store for us. But it takes willingness to keep our eyes open, drop our nets, and follow God even when strange things happen.

PRAYER

Faithful God, thank you for your faithfulness to me when I have been unfaithful, doing things I should not do and leaving undone things I should do. Prepare my heart and mind during this season of Lent, so that I am ready for your arrival to earth. Help me not only to pray "Come Lord Jesus," but also to be ready to follow you when you show up and want to use me to build your Kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus Christ's name, Amen.

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