

Jesus' New Way to Think

Mark 1:14-15

"Repent! The end is near!" In movies and cartoons, this phrase is typically found on handmade signs held by self-righteous, alarmist crackpots. So you may be puzzled to open the Bible, come across a summary of Jesus' preaching, and realize that Jesus said nearly the same thing.

Jesus went into Galilee, where he preached God's Good News. "The time promised by God has come at last!" he announced. "The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News." (Mark 1:14-15, NLT)

Since we've heard words like these before, we might miss what Jesus really meant. So let's examine three points he's making.

1. "Repent"

Unlike fanatics in the movies, when Jesus says "repent" He is not scolding, nor is He merely calling for a superficial change in outward behavior. It goes deeper than that. It involves a fundamental change in mental attitude.

Followers of Jesus re-think. We develop new core ideas about what it means to be successful and how to get that success. We hate the idea of merely trying harder to be good. Instead, we realize that deep, lasting change in behavior only happens when we're changed on the inside.

2. "The Kingdom Of God Is Near"

The call to repent is Jesus' invitation to join a movement unlike any other: God's Kingdom. Political kingdoms thrive on military power and shrewd alliances. Business empires grow rich through aggressive competition. Personal dynasties are built on charisma. But God's Kingdom is altogether different. It is powered by peace, love, and sacrifice, and it is populated with outcasts.

God's Kingdom also stands apart from other religious systems. Other religions tell people to find God and earn his favor. Jesus is the opposite. He comes, as God, and finds His people. He brings the Kingdom near to us and we receive him. All this is part of the new mindset.

3. "Believe The Good News"

The most startling feature of God's Kingdom is that it springs from "Good News." News is something that happens. It's a real story. Unlike other religious leaders, Jesus wants His followers to center their re-thinking not exclusively on His teaching or wisdom, but also on the story of His life.

All too often, our thinking is muddled and selfish, yet Jesus died and rose again for us. His sacrifice lets us share in God's Kingdom as His Spirit teaches us to think more clearly. That's news! Jesus' life story gives us everything we need. It frees us to stop living for those political and business and personal kingdoms, and embrace Jesus' new way to think.

Read More: Read Romans 12:2. How is "re-thinking" a central part of a believer's life? What are its benefits?

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