

Epiphany III FLC B  
Mark 1:14-20  
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## FISHING FOR PEOPLE

Our messages on Sunday usually center around the Gospel for the day, that is, the story of Jesus' life and ministry. We have four gospels in our New Testament, three are very similar, one the Gospel of John is very different. This year we will be reading most of our lessons from the Gospel of Mark, and today is no exception.

### I

Mark is the shortest of the Gospels, almost half as long as Matthew. Mark is the earliest of the Gospels, and we find that most of Mark's message shows up in Matthew and Luke. If four people wrote a story of your life, my guess is that they would point out different things about you. That is true of the Gospels. Mark sees things, well, through his own eyes.

Mark's account is brief, it is vivid, it is straightforward and direct. Mark is an activist, he records action. He uses the word "immediately" 9 times in the first chapter, 30 times in his gospel. He spends little time on reflection, he doesn't preach, like John, nor does he lecture, like Matthew. He is brief and straight to the point.

Today's message is no exception. Mark records the opening of Jesus' ministry. After Jesus' baptism and his temptation in the wilderness, Jesus begins preaching and teaching in Galilee saying "The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God has come near, repent and believe in the good news."

### II

The time is fulfilled: We need to say a word or two about time in the New Testament.

We tend to think of time as we would refer to a clock or watch. An appointment is set according to a time of day. That kind of time would be "chronos" as in "chronometer", something that measures hours, minutes, seconds.

Another form of time that Jesus refers to is "kairos", an appointed time, an appropriate time. Kairos means when things are ready, whenever that is. A child is born, not according to chronos but according to kairos, when it is ready!

The doctor may say a child is to be born on Tuesday April 7<sup>th</sup>! What does a doctor know? The child will be born when it is ready, as many an exasperated father knows.

Jesus says that the time (kairos) is at hand. Now is the time of repentance, now is the time for the Kingdom of God to break in and be known, taught, preached, manifested, revealed. This is the Epiphany that we speak of. Now is the time for God to be known and for Jesus to be seen as the one who proclaims the Word of God.

III

In Mark, Jesus does not just talk about it, he does it! Our Lord selects his disciples, his followers at the Sea of Galilee. He sees Simon and Andrew casting their nets into the water, for they were fishermen. In a play on words, Jesus invites them to follow him and he will make them “fish for people”. He calls James and John, also fishermen, and “immediately” he called them, and they followed Jesus. The action is condensed, abbreviated, vivid, decisive.

We are told they left everything and followed him. Poor old Zebedee sees his retirement plan walk away to follow the teacher. Everything. Though unstated, the men found in Jesus something far more important in the message of the Messiah. They left and forsook everything.

Do you remember Jesus’ parable of the man who found a treasure in the field. He went and sold all he had so he could buy that field!

IV

Such is OUR call to discipleship, to leave all behind that is unworthy of the Kingdom of God and follow Jesus. That the Kingdom of God is true worth and power, in our relationships with God and with one another. The Kingdom is that treasure of true worth. We are called not only to manifest the Kingdom in our own lives. We are called to be disciples and bring that message to others.

Epiphany is a Missionary season. We are disciples, entrusted with the word to the world. We are called to Discipleship in Jesus Christ, to be a light to the world, a city on the hill, an example of peace and justice, of equality and hope, of order in the midst of chaos, in short a New Creation.