

14 Now 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."

16 And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 17 Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will

make you become fishers of men." 18 They immediately left their nets and followed Him. 19 When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. 20 And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.

Dance of the Trinity and Dance of the Church - Dance of the Disciple of Jesus (Dirty Dancing)

Know - The difference Good News and good advice - Know what it means to be a follower/disciple of Jesus who is a fisher of men.

14 Now after John was put in prison,

Approximately a year later - John was put in prison because he accused Herod Antipas of marrying his brother's wife—against Jewish law -

Most commentators say that John's arrest marked a change in Jesus' ministry - "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30) - Once John is imprisoned, Jesus' ministry really takes off

John the B's doubt - are you the one - Jesus responded, Matt 11:4... "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: 5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. 6 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

Then later on the niece put on a dance show - cost John the baptist his head on a platter.

Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

Isaiah 9:1 Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, As when at first He lightly esteemed The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed her, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, In Galilee of the Gentiles. 2 The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.

**Gospel** = *euaggelion* - from *aggelos* = the word for a messenger, someone bringing news of an event that happened, and the prefix *eu*, which means joyful. So news that brings joy. Not daily news - historical life shaping news

A message of victory. Greece was invaded by Persia, and when the Greeks won the great battle of Marathon they sent evangelists, runners who brought the news to Athens. They said, "We have fought for you, and we won. You're not going to be slaves; you're free." That's the gospel right there. A gospel is something that happened in history and has been done for you that changes your status forever.

Good News not good advice. Gospel was used to describe - new of a positive life change in your life as a result of the actions of another - finding out about a historical event that changes one's life for the better.

This separates Christianity all other religions, or no religion. Religions are advice. Christianity is gospel. Religions say, "This is what you have to do, this is what you must accomplish, this is how you have to live, in order to be saved."

The gospel is, "This is what has been done in history. This is what has been accomplished. Jesus lived and died for you, to save you." The gospel call is a call of grace. Good News!

The burden of advice is on you, heavy, pride and oppression or failure and depression. Weighs you down.

The Gospel is Good news - based on what He has done, not what you have done or will do.

Advice - how to save yourself Gospel - how Jesus saved you. Freedom in living saved, as opposed to the restrictions and regulations of trying to save yourself. Trying to get life by having everything orbit you - do you orbit life (Jesus)

There is nothing that makes you more miserable than self-absorption. Are you always focused on "How am I feeling? How am I doing? How are people treating me? Am I proving myself? Am I succeeding? Am I failing? Am I being treated justly?" There's nothing more miserable, disintegrates mind and relationships

15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

**The time is fulfilled:** chronos = chronological time. Kairos - means "the strategic opportunity, the decisive time." Jesus used kairos - The strategic time for the kingdom of God is now. Now is your time of opportunity. Don't let it pass you by.

**Kingdom of God:** - Genesis 1, and 2 God created a perfect world in which all relationships were whole and perfect. The relationship with ourselves, with others, with God, with nature, with the physical world, was perfect, because God was the King.

In Genesis 3 we chose to be our own kings - the way of self-centeredness. And all relationships unravelled.

Why do we have wars, class struggle, family breakdown? When we decided to be our own king, everything fell apart ... our relationships physically, socially, spiritually and psychologically.

When we come back under the kingship of Jesus, everything will begin to heal. And when Jesus comes back, everything sad will come untrue. Fear will be gone. Suffering will be gone. Tears will be gone. The human race will be reunified. Poverty will be gone. Injustice will be gone. Hunger will be gone. Disease will be gone. Death will be gone. We'll be home!

**Repent and Believe the Good News** - Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom of God, He wanted people to know what entering that kingdom was like. They could not enter the kingdom going the same way they had been going. They had to change their direction

**Believe** = Gospel - Kingdom of God is about trusting God, taking Him at His word, and living a relationship of dependence on Him.

16 And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.

John 1 - a year earlier - Andrew hears Jesus and goes and gets Simon (Peter) could this be the Moses and the Prophets spoke about

**For they were fishermen:** These were common men - Jesus chose these disciples not for who they were, but for what Jesus could do *through* them.

17 Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." **Follow Me:** With this invitation, Jesus shows what Christianity is all about: following *Jesus*.

Jesus is saying, "Resembling me, pleasing me, serving me, knowing me must become the supreme passion of your life. Everything else, all these other things, have to be retooled to maximize your relationship with me.

People don't choose to follow Jesus on their own, following Jesus is the result of a call from Him.

18 They immediately left their nets and followed Him. 19 When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. 20 And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.

Peter, Andrew, James and John - while on shift leave their jobs and follow Jesus.

Becoming a disciple of Jesus, a follower of Jesus, doesn't mean becoming a fanatic - a fan of Jesus or a fan of Christianity - think of some sporting fans who are *very* religious and are also very condemning, very self-righteous, lack self control, very narrow, almost abusive.

Christianity has a large spectrum - people that say they believe, live a very self centered life living as they please - then there are the fanatics - self-centered life doing all the right things. Over believe, over live their Christianity. The reasonable reaction - somewhere in the middle.

But that doesn't jive with Jesus - Luke 14:25 and 26. He turns to the large crowd, and he says, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple." That is not a moderate stance on how to live.

If we are not allowed to hate our enemies, how can we hate mom and dad? Hate by comparison - follow so intensely all other attachments look like hate.

Jesus won't be used - we are not allowed to give conditions to our following. I'll follow you if \_\_\_\_\_

The problem with all of us is, we don't go extreme enough with Jesus, slackers and fanatics don't go far enough with their surrender to Jesus's salvation. Grace changes everything. Think of how your perspective of others will change if you know that you are a sinner saved by grace - good news - saved by another, even while I was a rebel, antagonist, defiant against the Lord.

We need to be extreme with Jesus, kind to everyone else. If we go halfway with Jesus, we will tend to be extreme with everyone else.

When Jesus says, "Come, follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." Following is a journey; it's a process. Becoming a fisher of men is a process that happens through following. Jesus wants to lead us through a process that our life will be effective at drawing people out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of light.

Have you ever been in the company of someone whose heart is so gospel saturated that they are really living as saved people? There is no self-centeredness because their inner-self is satisfied in Christ. No using, exploiting, manipulating, instead serving, giving, generosity, stability. It is like coming out of the darkness, out of chaos, into light, life.

Fisher of men are people who have been healed of their own self-absorption and their own self-centeredness (not in the dance - still saving themselves through advice - vs in the dance - saved by good news) and now can turn around and begin to draw other people into the light of serving God and serving others, *but* to get there takes a journey.

The way of Jesus can be scary, hard, difficult, dirty, painful, etc.. Jesus will lead you through circumstances in life to learn to die to self and embrace the Gospel, becoming a fisher of men.

When we follow Jesus we need to understand that we don't understand. The plans God has for you, and His motivation to transform is like trying to understand marriage as a 6 year old. We have no idea what it is going to take to, how hard it is going to be to grow in grace and be healed of our self centeredness.

Jesus says, "I'm going to be taking you on a journey. I don't want you to turn to the left or to the right. I want you to obey me. I want you to put me first. I want you to always do my will. I want you to keep praying. I want you to keep obeying the part of my will you understand.

I want you to go through all the nasty stuff that's going to happen to you in your life, and that will make you into fishers of men. I'm going to take you places, and you're going to say, if there be any other way, let this cup pass.

You see - Jesus is the perfect, ultimate fisher of men. The Father and Spirit lead him down the path of destruction, despair, and death taking our place to save us.

George MacDonald, "The one secret of life and development is not to devise and plan but to do the moment's duty aright, and then to let come, not what will, for there is no such thing, but what the eternal one wills for each of us and has intended in each of us from the first.... you will be dead, so long as you refuse to die."

He calls us to leave all for Him, because He left all for us. He left His Father's throne above, later in the Gospel of Mark He's going to lose his Father forever, infinitely, on the cross.

When he lost his Father on the cross (my God why have you forsaken me), he experienced *infinite* loss, hell itself. Follow Christ through thick and thin, good and bad, sickness and health - lead you to heaven.

*He* followed the God's will into destruction. So *you* can follow Him into greatness. As tough as it may be at times, Jesus Christ's kingship will not crush you. He was crushed *for* you. He went to hell so that you could fall into his arms.