

**The Time Has Come**  
**Mark 1:14-15**

So, I just invite you to turn to Mark chapter 1, and we'll continue on, and I'd like to remind you of some of what we have covered already as we've gone through this. It has not been a lot. It's just been, really, preliminary issues. It's been... a prologue is what we've seen. We've seen a prologue thus far. We saw the purpose of the book really coming out in verse 1 when Mark writes, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." This is the good news. This is the good news of Jesus the Messiah, the promised one, the Son of God, who really has the authority of God Himself. And then we saw that this was proven just by the fact that the Old Testament prophets anticipated this, by John the Baptist who came and preached this as well to the people of Israel, to the nation, especially in the region of Judea as he had his ministry of calling people to repentance and confessing their sins and being baptized because of this kingdom that was coming, because of this Messiah that was coming.

And then we saw the Messiah presented to us the last time as we saw Jesus baptized and the Father Himself speaking out of heaven giving affirmation to Jesus His Son, in addition to the Holy Spirit descending upon and resting upon Jesus; clearly proving and demonstrating Jesus is the Messiah and the promised one, the expected one, that would come. And then Mark gave us further affirmation of this as the Spirit drove and even led Jesus out into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan - and Jesus' ability to withstand such temptation even in difficult circumstances of the wilderness and fasting over extended period of time of forty days. So, this is the prologue of Mark's gospel that we've seen, this introduction to Jesus the Messiah.

And today, we have a shift. We have, really, a summary statement that hits us in verses 14 and 15. Jesus will be shifting and basically becoming the main character here as we move away from John the Baptist, and as we continue to focus on Jesus and, specifically, His ministry in the region of Galilee. And so, we get the summary statement that encapsulates verses 14 and 15 and much of the material that's to come. And so, we're going to take our time on these two verses because they'll help serve us and give us an understanding, a context, of what's going to happen as we unfold and see Jesus' ministry take place - at least how Mark records it for us. So, you can go ahead and follow along with me. We'll be looking at Mark 1, and I'll be

looking at these two verses, starting in verse 14; “Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” So, these are our verses here, and as you can tell, they are forming the summary statement of what’s to come as Jesus comes into Galilee. But there’s two main things that we’ll see in these verses, and the first one comes from verse 14. And we see, really, the highlight here is this move that takes place - the move that takes place in verse 14. That’s identified for us. So, we’re shifting our attention here to Jesus, and we see this move taking place, and we already see it in the verse. It’s a movement into Galilee - into Galilee. And so, we’re going to see three things about this movement, and then we’ll jump in to verse 15 and see, more specifically, the message that comes.

So first, we see the timing of this move - the timing of this move. And so, if we, really, just were to read this on the heels of verse 13, we would recognize that Mark skips over some time. Right? Where we left off, Jesus had just gotten baptized by John, and He had been tempted out in the wilderness, and now we’re jumping to this event, the arrest of John, John the Baptist. He says, “Now after John was arrested...” [“...after John was arrested...”] All right. There’s this shift that’s taking place. There’s this... really, in this moment, you have Mark choosing to highlight, now, Jesus for the rest of our time. It’s as if God’s taking the spotlight that was really shining upon John the Baptist - John who was out in the region of Judea in the wilderness and who had a booming ministry, who had people from all over Judea and Jerusalem coming out to him and being baptized and confessing their sins - this spotlight on John the Baptist and his amazing ministry; and now, we see it shift with some simple words. He’s arrested. He’s handed over.

“...after John was arrested...” Mark doesn’t take the time to give you the details. He doesn’t want to. He’s immediately getting into what’s more important, what he wants to discuss right now, and that’s Jesus. All right. He wants to shift, and he wants to get our attention, now, onto the ministry of Jesus that follows, the more important ministry as even John the Baptist would admit. But as far as the detail of this arrest, we do know some things. In fact, Mark will give us the details later on in his gospel, so we will get there. But I’ll just give you the general kind of summary now. John was arrested because he confronted a man named Herod - Herod who was the

tetrarch, a leader of the region of Galilee and even beyond that into Judea a little bit. And this Herod guy was involved in an immoral relationship. He was involved with the wife of his brother. Her name was Herodias, and she was with Phillip, his brother, but instead, Herod got involved; and so, John confronts Herod for this immoral relationship, and it lands him in jail. He gets arrested. So, more on that to come when we get to Mark chapter 6, but suffice it to say that's all Mark wants us to know right now; that at this moment when John is arrested, we now have Jesus taking action, stepping into His ministry. Right? Really, this is God sovereignly moving things along here. This isn't things falling apart. This isn't this detrimental failure on God's part and His plan. This is God doing exactly what He wants to do. John the Baptist came; he served a great purpose in ministry for his time. Now, God moves him off the scene to be arrested, for Jesus to rise into the ministry He must now take.

This is God still in complete control and, really, it's a passing of the baton, and not just in the sense of John the Baptist to Jesus, but even greater, really, if you look at this simple verse there from Luke 16; "The Law and the Prophets were until John..." As Jesus looks back on everything that's been said before Him, not just what John the Baptist said but even beyond that, everything that's been said before Jesus, He kind of... He draws a line. He says everything that's before Me, the prophets, the Law, and John - right there all together in what they're doing, in their ministry, in their speaking forth and telling of what's to come. And then Jesus is separate from them as coming onto the scene in a different manner, because He's greater than them. All right. He's greater than them. We've already seen that He is qualified. He is the Messiah. He is the Son of God. So this is, from man's perspective, a sad moment because John the Baptist was a great, bold preacher for Christ, but he is now moving off the scene as he gets arrested and we see Jesus moving onto the scene. Sad from the human perspective, but from God's perspective, it's absolutely necessary, and He's in complete control of this. It's what must take place.

So, this is the pass-off, this is the transition that, really, kind of kicks into gear everything that will now happen with not only our verses this morning but the ministry that's to come in Galilee with Jesus. So, what does Jesus began to do in this first phrase? What is the first thing Jesus does? He relocates. Right? He specifically chooses a location as we see in our verse; "...after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee..." ["...Jesus came into

Galilee...”] And so, just to maybe help you out here and make sure that we’re all on the same page with geography of Israel - it’s always good to be reminded through a map – really, Israel, you could divide it into three sections if you wanted to be very kind of... just more like from a big picture standpoint. There’s more to it than that, but if you had the most northern section of Israel, you had Galilee up there, not just the Sea of Galilee and what’s around it, but even the region expanding beyond that. And then the middle section of Israel would be Samaria. And then moving down to Judea, the southern section, where you had Jerusalem and the temple. And so, as we’ve talked about so far, we’ve been focusing on John the Baptist, his ministry which was in Judea, in the wilderness, and at the Jordan River, right, and Jesus who got baptized by John the Baptist, and Jesus who was tempted in the wilderness; all that was south. All that was south in Judea. Right? That’s where we’ve been looking, down in Judea and in the wilderness down there.

So now, there’s a transition here in this move. John is arrested, and Jesus intentionally... He purposefully makes His way to Galilee. And I say intentionally. I say purposefully, because He actually thinks through this. There’s a reason why He does this. It’s not just, you know... Oh, you know, what? I’m from Nazareth, so I guess I’ll just go back to Galilee. You know, I got some family... You know, I guess it’s... I mean, now that John’s arrested, what do I do? Right? Some people actually like to go the next step, and they like to say, well, Herod arrested John, and so that got Jesus scared. Jesus said I’m out of here. I’m not hanging out in Judea anymore. I’m going up to Galilee. The only problem with that is that Herod’s kind of reign and dominion and the jurisdiction of what he had... it expanded to Galilee as well. So it wasn’t, really, like Jesus was running away if He went to Galilee; so that’s not why.

We actually get some help from other parts of the, really, the Bible; and specifically in the gospel of Matthew, we find that Jesus moving to do His ministry in Galilee is a fulfillment of prophecy. Isaiah actually prophesized this. He prophesized that a light would come into the region of Galilee, the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali. And so, this region of Galilee would receive this light that would be the Messiah to come. And so, Jesus is intentionally going to Galilee, not for the comfort of home, and not to run away, but to fulfill prophecy, to continue to carry out His work as the Messiah. And even more than that, some would go so far as to say that Jesus is establishing His

own independent ministry. This is His home base. This will be His, like, operation command center for the bulk of His ministry. It will be in Galilee. Not that Jesus doesn't do other ministry or teaching in other places, we will see that, and essentially, where He's crucified is not in Galilee. However, most of what we will see in the life of Christ is taking place in Galilee. This will be where Jesus does His ministry. So, this is the move that takes place. This is His location. He intends to go to Galilee.

So, what does He want to do in Galilee? That's a question. He wants to go to Galilee, and our question is why? What will He do there? So, we see the reason for this move, not just fulfilling prophecy, but as we look back at our verse - in verse 14; "...after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God..." ["...proclaiming the gospel of God..."] He wants to preach. Jesus wants to preach. He wants to preach good news. John the Baptist was preaching and had his vital ministry in Judea, and Jesus knows that it is time, not just to fulfill prophecy by going into Galilee, but it is time to proclaim, to speak, to tell the people good news, to preach good news. This is the Messiah's mission. The Messiah must come, and a part of what the Messiah must come and do is not just stand there and look good or say, hey, I'm the Messiah and tell people that, but He must preach good news, must preach and get this message out to the people. This is what the Old Testament expected of the Messiah, and this is what Jesus did. Jesus, falling right in line with the expectation of the Old Testament, preaches. He moves to Galilee to preach the good news.

The Old Testament support we could see in other places as well, but here I'll just highlight one for you in Isaiah 61:1-2, and this is referring to the Messiah. It's a Messianic prophecy, and we know this because in other gospels, Jesus actually will go into a synagogue and read this portion of the prophet of Isaiah, and He'll say, today this is fulfilled in your hearing. Jesus will say I am this Messiah. This is Me. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me..." Well, we already saw that, didn't we? At His baptism, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him. So, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor..." This is the expectation; the Messiah would not only have the Holy Spirit upon Him, but the Messiah would also preach, proclaim good news, bring this good news to the people. And so, Jesus comes to Galilee in

a strategic fashion to do this, to proclaim this good news, to do exactly what the people expected the Messiah to do. So, this is Jesus coming in and proclaiming this good news.

Well, we're thankful that there's more to this than just that general statement of what Jesus did. We learn more of the content, because that's the question. Well, what is this good news? Right? I want to know, specifically, what the good news is. And we have it further lined out for us in verse 15. So, in verse 15, we find the message. So, the move took place in verse 14 as Jesus officially moves into Galilee - sets up there - and we will see that for the passages that we encounter following. And Mark now gives us the content of this good news, this gospel of God, that He is proclaiming, the message.

So, we see three things about this message as well. The first thing that we see is the urgency of the message - the urgency of this message. Verse 15 states, "...and saying, "The time is fulfilled..." This is, really, a massive statement for Jesus to say this, because we might think, the time for what? The time is fulfilled for what? What does Jesus mean by this? Does this mean He made it into Galilee? He unloaded all the boxes into His house, and He's officially moved in? "The time is fulfilled..." I made it. All right. Now I can relax and get back to business. What is He implying by this; "The time is fulfilled..."? This is really a large statement. This is something that would catch people's attention. This is why He's proclaiming it to people. He wants them to know "The time is fulfilled..." And right away, this is so significant because of the nature of who the Jewish people were at this time. They were a people that were waiting. They were a people that had eager anticipation for what was to come. They had truth. They had the Old Testament. They had the Law and the prophets and the Psalms, and they had these Scriptures that kept telling them of what was to come. They were a future looking people; this is who they were. And so, at this time, they're drawing in the land of Israel, but they don't even own it. The Romans are over them, and they view themselves as, really, oppressed by the Romans at this time; and their hope is, it's coming. The time is coming. The time is coming when God will fulfill these promises that He gave to us. The time is coming when God will bring about His kingdom, and so Jesus comes onto the scene and says, "The time is fulfilled..."

Is that going to get people's attention? The very nature of who they are - I mean, we really need to try harder to get ourselves into their shoes. Their

rich heritage is about two thousand years at this point. At this point, they can look back over two thousand years of God's dealing with them as a people, and they have tons of history. I mean, they can go back to the very beginning of it all with God taking Abraham, the city boy in Babylon, and saying, come out of there and go to a land that I'll promise you and become a nation; and I will make you great and a blessing to all peoples. They could recall how they then went into bondage and slavery in Egypt, and how God chose to raise up Moses, this leader that would deliver them and bring them out and guide them as they wander in the wilderness. They could remember Joshua, how God worked through Joshua to take the nation of, you know, tons and thousands, and even millions of people to come into the Promised Land, to take over the land of Canaan as God had promised. They could remember the amazing reigns of David and Solomon, these kings. And they could say, this is amazing heritage that we have. This is all an expectation of God's promises of what He's going to do with us as a people in bringing this kingdom.

And then, they could remember the terrible decline. They could remember the failure after failure as king after king... after David and Solomon got worse and worse. They could remember how God punished them; how God kicked them out of the land and sent them into exile. They could recall how God was faithful after a period of time to bring them back, to bring them back into the land, to let them rebuild the temple. But at the same time, they could recall how things never fully recovered. Things never got back to the full glory that they were when Solomon was reigning. The temple was never as glorious. Their leaders were never as glorious and righteous. They didn't even own the land. They knew that this was not the way that it was supposed to be. They still had these promises from God; two thousand years of God's dealing with them and promises that God would fulfill and bring a kingdom. God will reign. He will send a Messiah for these people.

So - all that in mind - and Jesus comes and says, "The time is fulfilled..." That will get people to wake up. That will get people to realize and start connecting dots here, and say is Jesus saying what I think He's saying? Is He really starting to connect everything that we're waiting for and anticipating? And He's going to start to say that it's now? The time is now? "The time is fulfilled..." Is this what Jesus is saying? I mean, this is massive. Because we think about our heritage and we think about the United States of America and Memorial Day, and we think about, you know, how great it is, and we're

not even, you know, three hundred years old. But we look back on our history and we're thankful and we're proud, and we're able to look back at this and teach it and be excited about it. And how much more so for these people that are listening to Jesus - two thousand years, seven times as long our history - miraculous dealings, supernatural intervention with God on behalf of Israel time and time and time again - and this promise comes in the person of Jesus. "The time is fulfilled..." This is significant.

And even other New Testament writers help us realize that this is as significant as we think it ought to be. Here's two verses from the New Testament that help us see that this is really the truth when Jesus is saying this. He does not mean something superficial by this statement. Galatians 4:4; "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son..." God intentionally knew what He was doing as He worked with Israel over year after year after year and generation after generation; and then He sent forth His Son at the perfect time. This is God's perfect planning. And further, in Ephesians 1:9-10, Paul says how God made "...known to us the mystery of His will, according to His purpose, which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time..." Jesus is the fulfillment of this time, this expectation, this anticipation, that these people had. Jesus says it's fulfilled. "The time is fulfilled..." in His presence with them as He preaches this. "The time is fulfilled..." So this is massive, not just because of the history, but also because afterwards, as we see how Paul and other New Testament writers reflect on this, Jesus truly did come and change everything, because He was qualified, and He actually meant it when He said it. "The time is fulfilled..." in His person and work coming.

So how, exactly, is this time fulfilled? We get more specific with this and as we look back at Mark 1:15, we see that there is more specifics given to this message. It is not just an urgent message; we also learn the specific content of this message. So, the middle of verse 15 - we see the content, the content of the message. Jesus states, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand..." ["The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand..."] Jesus does say exactly what the Jews probably thought He was saying. Jesus does go so far as to say the anticipation, the wait, the eagerness - I'm here to tell you that "The time is fulfilled..." and the kingdom is coming with My presence. This is a massive statement. I mean, just because the phrase the kingdom of God in and of itself is a loaded concept, not just because they had this eager anticipation and waiting for the kingdom to come, but just



how this concept fulfills all and, really, goes throughout all of Scripture is substantial. In fact, if you were to, you know, take a step back and read the whole Bible for yourself, you know, you do a Bible-in-a-year-plan or something like that, then afterwards, you know, Spark notes hires you to write, a little review on the Bible. And then they say, what is the main theme? What's the main theme of the Bible? Summarize it; just give us one concept that's the main theme of the Bible. I mean, that's a daunting task. You're going to have to go back over everything you read in the Old Testament to the New Testament. What's the main unifying theme of the Bible? That's difficult and many theologians have spent hours and spilled a ton of ink on pages trying to debate and argue about what the main theme of the Bible is; but one of the best answers and probably the correct one is the theme of kingdom, God's kingdom.

This is Jesus announcing the kingdom of God, and this is a loaded concept all throughout Scripture - all throughout Scripture. This is a massive understanding. This is a massive kind of, basically, expectation that not just the Jewish people have, but the whole earth has. I mean, when we think of this idea of kingdom, you start to think, well okay, I understand this concept of God as a King and Him being sovereign (we use that word). He's a ruler. He's a King. He reigns over all; and I think we all admit that. We go, yeah, I think God is in control, and He does rule and reign over all; and we would call this the universal kingdom of God, this concept. God is definitely over all things just as one of many verses would say. Psalms 103:19; "The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom rules over all." And for us, it doesn't take a lot of convincing. We look around and we recognize, and we know from Scripture, that God created everything. If God's the One that created everything, created us, spoke it into existence, clearly, He owns it. Clearly, He is the King, and He is the ruler of all. So, this is the concept that we would call the universal kingdom of God. This is true. We don't have a ton of debate over this because I think most people would agree with this if they're a believer, a Christian; they would say, yeah, God does reign over all things - there's this universal kingdom concept.

But there's this problem because you and I look around, and we look on earth, and does it really feel like God gets the right press that He deserves? Does it really seem like, when we look around, that God is recognized as the King on this earth? Is God really seen as that, the ruler, the One who rules over all? Is that the case on this earth? And you say, well, I mean, obviously

God is using all things to His glory. And I would say I completely agree. Amen to that! That's what the Bible teaches; God is sovereignly in control of all things. He causes all things to work together for our good, His glory. He's doing that, but you still, when you read the Bible, you find promise after promise after promise, and this expectation, that there will be a kingdom on this earth. God will have His kingdom on this earth, and He will be the King. This is what we can just call the earthly kingdom of God - the earthly kingdom of God. And one of many verses that kind of captures this promise is Zechariah 14:9; "And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day the Lord will be one and His name one."

And if you keep reading Zechariah 14, if you keep reading all these other promises that continue to kind of fall after each other in the prophets, in the Old Testament and even into the New, you recognize that there's more than just God Himself reigning as King. There's going to be the exaltation of Jerusalem and the temple and glorious nature, and the Dead Sea will become fresh water - won't be salt water anymore - and everything's going to change. And there's all these promises, and so, this is a promise of an earthly kingdom, God Himself reigning as the King over this planet. And we don't see that. You and I live our lives; we experience sin. We see the effects of sin. We look around and we see how people treat each other. We see how things are dealt with. We see even the nature around us, and we recognize there's earthquakes you know, this catastrophic event. And these things are taking place, and we think this doesn't seem like the earthly kingdom of God that's promised in Scripture. And so, there is still this expectation, while God does universally reign over all things because He's the Creator, and there's no denying that, there's still this expectation of that reign to come to this earth and for Him to set up His earthly kingdom. And so, we find Jesus here in this text, saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand..." This is a massive concept. This is a loaded message, and really, this is good news.

This is amazing news for the people listening to Jesus. They look around and all they see is oppression. They look around at what they're experiencing, and they see the dominance of sin, and they don't see anything close to the promises of the prophets being fulfilled. So for them to hear this concept, to hear Jesus say, "...the kingdom of God is at hand..." It's coming. This is great news. This means everything's going to get changed. This means the curse that came upon mankind at the Garden of Eden is now going to be

flipped. This means it's going to be reversed completely, and we're to see these promises of this earthly kingdom start to come. This is amazing news for them to hear that. For you and I, we still look around; we still see this kingdom that takes place on this earth that's not a kingdom of God; but really, you see Satan having his way. He is the god of this age as Paul describes it. And so, this too, is good news for us as we think about the kingdom of God coming to this earth to change everything. This is amazing news. This is the content, and this is what Jesus intends to preach; the time is now. "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand..."

And it's amazing because Jesus... it's not like He's just a guy that can just... He just kind of says it. He just throws it out there; I'm just going to say that and see what happens. He's not all talk. Jesus backs up these words. Because you consider the context - this is like a summary statement that will permeate throughout the rest of His Galilean ministry that we're going to see in the verses that follow. So, Jesus probably says this more than once. And so, He might say it now, here. He'll heal someone; He'll probably say it again. He'll do an amazing miracle; He'll say it again. And so, He constantly, as He is demonstrating His power - as He's demonstrating His authority over nature, right, He's calming storms and telling nature what to do. As He's casting demons out of people, He's controlling the spiritual realm and demonic forces. As He's healing people of sickness and illness and paralysis - as He's doing all these things, He's saying, "...the kingdom of God is at hand..." Do His words actually carry weight with them? You bet. He's showing that He has the authority. He's the only one that can say this. He's the only one that could even dare to say these words and to dare to get people expecting the kingdom to come because He Himself has demonstrated this authority, this power, over and over and over again as we will see.

I mean, this message comes loaded and really hits like a ton of bricks. I mean, for example, what's more impactful for you? If you were to go to work, say, not tomorrow because you have tomorrow off, hopefully, but if you go to work on Tuesday, and someone that's in your office is a new hire (they just got there - been working for a month - no one else really knows them), but they say to everyone in the office, hey, we're all getting a raise, and you go, well that's great. And you start to ask other people, did you hear we're getting a raise? And they go, I didn't hear anything about that. And you talk to your boss - are we really getting a raise? No, that's not true. We

didn't hear anything about that. I don't know about that, at least. ...talk to your supervisor and you keep talking to other people, and you realize no one else's said anything about this raise except for this person that's brand new. And who even knows them? And where their source is, we don't know. You become doubtful. You start to think I don't know if that's really that great of news. I don't even know if that's even going to happen, but you walk into work - your boss calls everyone together. He shows you reports. He shows you quarterly... He shows you income reports - shows you how well the company's doing, and then goes on to say therefore, we're all getting a raise. You start to go, hey, I believe this because this is the man in charge. He knows what he's doing. He actually has the substantive evidence to support this claim. And so, in the same way, Jesus is here, and He has the authority. He has the power. He's the only one that can make this claim. He's the only one that can say, "...the kingdom of God is at hand..." because He has demonstrated clearly that He is the King. You can't have a kingdom without a king. And so, He manifests and shows over and over again His authority as the King to bring in this kingdom. This is great news. This is amazing news for these people to hear this, this expectation, this anticipation, fulfilled in this Man that has come and done these amazing displays of power and authority.

But the message does not just stop there. The message does not just stop with this claim; the kingdom of God is coming. "...the kingdom of God is at hand..." so, I'll see you at dinner tonight. All right. It's not the end of it. It's not "...the kingdom of God is at hand..." and everyone went their own way. This message has a response. All right. The demands of the message - there are demands that are laid out. As Jesus is the only one with the authority to give such a statement of expectation, He also gives the appropriate response. As we look back at verse 15, He says, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." ["...repent and believe in the gospel."] This is a kind of two-fold response here as far as the demands are concerned. First, He says repent. And if you were to look at what this word just literally means when you define it, and you kind of break it down as far as what it's saying in the Greek, it's a change of mind, to change your mind, to change your thinking about something, to think differently. But I would go so far as to say, as far as it's used in the Bible and how the authors of Scripture use this word, it is to think differently in such a way that it changes your life, that your life is changed. It is not mere head knowledge. It is repentance in such a way that you turn; you are

reoriented completely with the knowledge that you have gained. You used to think one way, and you used to, therefore, live another way, but because of this new knowledge, you now think differently, and therefore, your life reflects that new knowledge. You think differently. You also live differently.

If you're driving down a road (and we understand this concept of U-turn), your navigation system tells you you're going the wrong way; you need to take a U-turn. You know, you might actually respond at that point. You could also have people that say, yeah, I've been to where you're going before, and you're definitely going the wrong way. The navigation's right, you need to take a U-turn. You now have knowledge. Would it make any sense for you to go, you know what, you guys are right, this doesn't seem like I'm going the right way, I'm going to keep going though for another while? I'm going to keep going until we run out of gas and see what happens, or maybe if I drive around the world, then I'll get to where we're going because I'm going the wrong way, and eventually, I'll be going the right way, somehow. It would make no sense. Once you are informed and you actually believe that, you understand that what's been told to you is the right way of thinking, you automatically make the U-turn. You automatically change your life; you live differently. This is the concept of repentance, to think differently, to change your mind in such a way that you live differently; and you would be willing to give whatever it takes because you now believe this new information.

Jesus summarizes and kind of illustrates this concept of repentance in a couple of parables for us. Matthew 13:44-45; Jesus says, "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field." It would make no sense for this man to discover this treasure in a field and say, wow, that's really cool. Lucky for that owner that doesn't even know about it. I'll just continue on my way. When you have this knowledge of the treasure and the incredible value that it is, you're eager to sell everything you have. You don't even think twice about it. You're willing to make whatever accommodations need to be made so that you can buy this field for the sake of that treasure. This is repentance; you now change your mind about something, and now you live differently. You're willing to give up whatever it takes because now you believe differently; you think differently. This is what Jesus is calling His people to as He presents this message; "...the kingdom of God has come upon you." It is in your midst here, so change;

start acting like it. Start living like a kingdom citizen. Start living like one who's worthy of this kingdom is what Jesus is telling His people.

Not just repentance but we go on. We also see they're to "...believe in the gospel." "...repent and believe in the gospel." And these two concepts are really just two different sides of the same coin. Because in one sense, you need to repent. You need to change. You need to turn and reorient yourself, but you also need to believe and continue to walk forward on the correct path. You need to continue to place full dependence, full trust, in who God is and what He said. And what Christ is presenting here, that the kingdom is coming, there is this necessity to actually continue to live your life with that hope and expectation. Even if you look around and you hear Jesus say this, and you say the Romans are still in control. I don't see this amazing new Jerusalem and new temple like we were expecting. This doesn't look like the kingdom. Even if it doesn't look like it, you still have faith, and you believe and move forward. It's as Hebrews 11:1 states, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." You are certain of what you're hoping for even though it's not visible to you now; these people were to not worry about that but to have full faith, move forward, press on.

Many people did follow Jesus. Did that mean they had faith? Did they have true saving faith in the way that Jesus is calling for, here? You and I know the rest of the story. We know what happens. Jesus is amazing. He's so popular; people love Him. I mean, heck, it's great to bring your loved ones to this miracle worker that's going to heal them. It's amazing thing. They want to see signs and magic tricks, and they want to see this authority continue to be displayed in miracles. And He's popular; but that doesn't last. Eventually, the people turn on Him completely. Their faith completely vanishes, and when they realize, and they look around, they still don't have the kingdom that they want right now - the Romans gone - Israel in complete control. When they realize that that's not what's taking place, they turn on Him. They demand for Him to be crucified, and they kill Him. This is not true faith because it vanished completely.

This is the true message here that Jesus gives to His people. And it, really, continues to be the message to you and to me. We live in a time where we look around, and is the world as it should be? Is the world even close to what God intended? When God created Adam and said, have dominion over this amazing world and garden that I've created for you, is that what we're living

right now? Is this paradise? It's obvious that we can look around and say, not even close - absolutely not. But is Jesus coming back? Does Scripture teach that Jesus is coming back? Did Jesus say that He is coming back, and His return is imminent, and He will set up His kingdom? We don't need any more evidence of that. You don't need to be getting more convinced about that. He will come back. He died and rose again and that's plenty evidence - plenty evidence for you to know that He will make good on this promise, all the promises of Scripture.

The question is how do you respond? Are you still skeptical? Will you believe it when you see it? If that's the case, this is not the faith that Jesus is calling for. I would imagine that there are some here that still don't believe this. And I would urge you, repent; change your thinking. Do not allow yourself to go down this road of denial, deception, thinking that the world is fine, thinking that it is fun to enjoy the flesh. It is enticing, and there are better plans, and you have a better plan for your life. Don't fall for the lie. Don't continue down that path; change your thinking and recognize that that path only leads to one end; that's destruction. Change your thinking. Recognize that there is a King. He came once to this earth to deal with sin, your sin. He took it upon Himself; He went to the cross, did away with it. You can have forgiveness. You can have that completely washed away if you change your thinking and follow after that King because the reward is amazing. He will come back. He will reward you and all who have faithfully followed after Him and given up anything and everything for the sake of Him.

The message is also the same for those of us that do believe. Do we get distracted? Do we have days, weeks, seasons of life, where we forget what we're doing here on this earth? Do we still have moments of weakness where we succumb to the flesh, and we like our sin? And we actually think I actually like my sin better than I like this Bible. Do we have those moments? Absolutely! What's the message for us? Repent; change your thinking. Sin is not worth it, and never has been and never will be. There's a cost for that sin; Jesus paid it. We must all get back on the right path, move forward in faith. Though we look around and things don't look how we want them to look, we know the promise and the expectation of what is to come. Jesus our King has dealt with sin at the cross, and He's coming back to set up His kingdom. Let us repent and believe in that and live as citizens worthy of that kingdom.