**Come After Me**

**By Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Mark 1:14-22**

**Wednesday Evening**

**August 1, 2018**

**14 Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,**

Saints, Mark mentioned the arrest of John the Baptist as merely a signal for the ministry of Jesus into Galilee, his home region. Luke explained that John was arrested because he publicly rebuked King Herod for taking his brother’s wife. John’s public protests greatly angered Herod, so he put John in prison, presumably to silence him.

**Matthew 14:1-12**

1 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the report about Jesus 2 and said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him." 3 For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife.

4 Because John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." 5 And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. 6 But when Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod. 7 Therefore he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. 8 So she, having been prompted by her mother, said, "Give me John the Baptist's head here on a platter."

9 And the king was sorry; nevertheless, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he commanded it to be given to her. 10 So he sent and had John beheaded in prison. 11 And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. 12 Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

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

Saints, the Old Testament prophets often spoke of the future Kingdom, ruled by a descendant of King David, that would be established on earth and exist for eternity. Thus when Jesus spoke of the time and the presence of the Kingdom of God, the Jews understood him to mean that the Messiah had come to fulfill or inaugurate his long-awaited Kingdom. Jesus reassured them that God was in sovereign control. He had begun to act in a new and decisive way.

**Matthew 3:2**

and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

**Matthew 4:17**

From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

**Acts 2:38**

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 20:21**

testifying to Jews and Greeks alike about repentance to God and faith in our Lord Jesus.

**Galatians 4:4**

But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,

**Ephesians 1:10**

as a plan for the fullness of time, to bring all things in heaven and on earth together in Christ.

**Photo of the King of Kings**

**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.**

Saints, the Sea of Galilee is, in reality, a large lake-650 feet below sea level, 150 feet deep, and surrounded by hills. Fishing was the main industry for the approximately thirty fishing towns that surrounded the Sea of Galilee during Jesus’ day.

**Photos of the Sea of Galilee>**

Fishing with nets was the most common fishing method. A circular net (ten to fifteen feet in diameter) was cast into the sea. Then it was drawn up, and the catch was hoisted into the boat. The first pair of men Jesus called to follow him were brothers, Simon and Andrew.

This was not the first time Simon and Andrew had met Jesus. Andrew had been a disciple of John the Baptist who, when introduced to “the Lamb of God,” turned and followed Jesus (John 1:35-39).

**John 1:35-39**

35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. 36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" 37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?" 39 He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

Andrew then brought his brother Simon to Jesus (John 1:42). These men understood and believed who Jesus was.

**John 1:42**

“And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).”

**17 Then Jesus said to them, "Come after Me, and I will make you become fishers of men."**

Saints, Jesus told Simon (Peter) and Andrew to leave their fishing business, come and be his disciples, and fish for people to also follow Jesus. These disciples were adept at catching fish, but they would need special training before they would become able to fish for people’s souls.

Jesus was calling them away from their productive trades to be productive spiritually by helping others believe the Good News and carry on Jesus’ work after he was gone.

**Luke 9:23**

“Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”

**Luke 14:25-26**

25 “Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 26 “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters–yes, even their own life–such a person cannot be my disciple.”

**Matthew 10:37**

“Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.”

**Matthew 10:38**

“Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me.”

**18 And immediately they left their nets and followed Him.**

Saints, after their previous meeting with Jesus, Simon Peter and Andrew had returned to fishing. But when Jesus called them to follow him as disciples, they left their nets at once.

Their lives had changed; their allegiance was now to their teacher. Mark taught radical discipleship; a person must leave all behind to follow Jesus.

**Luke 14:33**

“So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple”

**Luke 18:18-23**

18 Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 19 So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. 20 You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' "

21 And he said, "All these I have kept from my youth." 22 So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." 23 But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

**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.**

Saints, not far down the beach was another pair of brothers, James and John, Simon Peter’s partners .

**Luke 5:10**

and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men."

Saints, these men were sitting in their moored boat mending their nets. The weight of a good catch of fish and the constant strain on the nets meant that the fishermen had to spend a lot of time, keeping their nets repaired and in good shape. John had met Jesus previously. In his Gospel, John records his own and Andrew’s discipleship with John the Baptist and then their turning to follow Jesus (John 1:35-39). James probably knew about Jesus from his brother, John. These men were ready for Jesus’ call.

**20 And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.**

Saints, both sets of brothers immediately left behind the lives they had known and embarked on an incredible adventure. Surely the impression Jesus made upon them must have been great, and the certainty of their call must have been strong for them to follow without hesitation.

**Matthew 10:37**

“Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.”

**21 Then they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and taught.**

**Photos of Capernaum>**

Saints, Capernaum, located on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, was the largest of the many fishing towns surrounding the lake. Jesus had recently moved to Capernaum from Nazareth.

**Matthew 4:12-16**

12 Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali

Capernaum was a thriving town with great wealth as well as great sin and decadence. Because it was the headquarters for many Roman troops, heathen influences from all over the Roman Empire were pervasive.

**Matthew 11:20-24**

20 Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: 21 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. 23 And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you."

**22 And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.**

Saints, the people were completely amazed by Jesus’ teaching. The Jewish teachers of religious law often quoted from well-known rabbis to give their words more authority. But Jesus didn’t have that need.

Because Jesus was the Son of God, he knew exactly what the Scriptures said and meant. He was the ultimate authority. The people had never heard such teaching. The teachers of religious law were the legal specialists in Jesus’ day.

They interpreted the law but were especially concerned about the halakah or “rules” for life that came to be as binding as God’s written law in the Torah. Their self-assured authority, in fact, became a stumbling block for them, for they denied Jesus’ authority to reinterpret the law, and they rejected Jesus as the Messiah because he did not agree with nor obey all of their traditions.

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace." '**