

Reflection Sunday 6th September

Mark 1:15

¹⁵ “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

During September two of my church congregations are being led in their morning worship with a message from each of the four gospels. Each was written for a different community at a different time with a differing emphasis, yet each still speaks to us today. I will be focusing on the uniqueness of Mark’s Gospel, the shortest and fastest moving.

This verse above contains the first words spoken by Jesus recorded in Mark’s Gospel.

First words can be very important. This weekend there will be a number of presbyters and deacons standing in front of a new congregation having changed Circuits or taken up a first appointment after leaving college. What will be their first words?

Some people will be returning to an act of public worship for the first time in many months. What will be the first message they will hear?

At the heart of the message of the Church is Gospel, good news, news of an epoch event of some 2000 years ago. An event of world transforming dimensions; the coming of Jesus into the world “our God contracted to a span, incomprehensibly made man,” to quote Charles Wesley, an event like no other.

Yet this is not where Mark begins, nothing about a birth story, Mark begins with the ministry of Jesus and this amazing message.

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Repent, Metanoia (the Greek word), rethink life, for the Kingdom of God is near. Look at things afresh for the Kingdom of God is near; check out your priorities for the Kingdom of God is near; change the way you live for the Kingdom is near.

September 2020 is the beginning of a new Methodist Church year with many opportunities ahead. It is a time of new beginnings. Let us truly repent, rethink, for the kingdom of God is near. Let us not just do what we did last year and the year before as soon as we can but wonder before God what life in the Kingdom is to be like in this new age of mask and continued social distancing.