

Scripture Study Sheet for July 4, 2021 @ CAPC Oakland

Mark 1:14-20

New Revised Standard Version

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming *the good news* of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; **REPENT**, and **BELIEVE** in *the good news*."

¹⁶ As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." ¹⁸ And immediately they left their nets and **FOLLOWED** him. ¹⁹ As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰ Immediately he **CALLED** them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and **FOLLOWED** him.

1 Corinthians 1:17-2:10

New Revised Standard Version

¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim *the gospel*, and not with eloquent **wisdom**, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

¹⁸ For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being *saved* it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written,

"I will destroy the **wisdom** of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

²⁰ Where is the one who is **wise**? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the **wisdom** of the

Language Notes & Textual Connections

Mark is most likely the first of the Gospel stories of the life, teaching and mission of Jesus to be written down. Short, sweet and sparse, our selection comes in the opening words as Jesus enters the scene and moves decidedly into action.

the good news :: The Greek word εὐαγγέλιον pronounced "euangelion" means good news, tidings or message and gospel. It's the good news of a victory or an overcoming of an obstacle. It has come to mean the Gospel – literally, "God's good news."

REPENT The Greek word μετανοέω pronounced "metanoéo" means to change one's mind or purpose. It's more than just regretting a past action, or asking for forgiveness. It's a total reorganization in how one sees the world and lives in it. It's been compared to making a total U-turn in one's life and world-view.

BELIEVE The Greek word πιστεύετε pronounced "pisteúō" means to believe, but is more than just about an idea. It means to place one's confidence and/or trust in someone or something else. So it can be as much relational and intellectual or spiritual.

FOLLOW:: The The Greek word ἀκολουθέω pronounced "koloutheó" means to follow one who precedes, to join him/her as their attendant, accompany him - to literally walk in the footsteps and/or shadow of another person, to become someone's disciple or student in the Ancient World. To do what they do.

1 Corinthians is the name of the letter of pastoral advice that the apostle Paul wrote to the church community in the Ancient Greek town of Corinth. It was a major metropolitan city, rooted in maritime trade. As such it has a vibrant and diverse population. The church there was quite vibrant and struggled with many communal problems relating to wealth and poverty, diversity in terms of ethnicity and religious background and growing into a like-Jesus lifestyle.

world? ²¹ For since, in the **wisdom** of God, the world did not know God through **wisdom**, God decided, through the foolishness of our **PROCLAMATION**, to save those who believe. ²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire **wisdom**, ²³ but we **PROCLAIM** Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are the **CALLLED**, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the **wisdom** of God. ²⁵ For God's foolishness is wiser than human **wisdom**, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

²⁶ Consider your own **CALL**, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us **wisdom** from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

2 ¹ When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. ² For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. ³ And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. ⁴ My speech and my **PROCLAMATION** were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

⁶ Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. ⁷ But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ But, as it is written,

"What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the human heart conceived,
what God has prepared for those who love him"—

¹⁰ these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

Language Notes & Textual Connections

wisdom: : The Greek word for wisdom is Sophia which means wisdom, insight, skill (human or divine), and intelligence. It is the root of the English terms, "sophistication" and "philosophy" – literally (respectively), "the art of using wisdom," "affection for wisdom." In the Ancient World, in particular the Greek and Roman cultures, Sophia (wisdom) was the highest and most precious value. The philosopher Socrates (427 BCE — 347 BCE) said that has said that "an unexamined life is not worth living." He believed that the purpose of life was to grow spiritually, and philosophically; he argued that is was important to question and "examine" your values and beliefs in order to determine if they were the correct ones. However, he believed that it is better to seek knowledge and be conscious of your own ignorance than to claim knowledge that you really do not have.

PROCLAIM The Greek word κήρυγμα pronounced "kérugma" means the proclamation of news in the public square by a herald or public crier. In the writings of the Bible it comes to mean literally "preaching," - always a public action.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged you, enraged you, or surprised you in the text?
- In Mark 1 we hear that the proclamation of the good news leads to repentance, a change in mindset and living which then leads to a calling to follow, to live like Jesus lived.
- In 1 Corinthians 1 the apostle Paul presents the gospel as different Sophia-Wisdom than the Sophia-Wisdom of the world. Knowing that Sophia-Wisdom was the most prized possession in the Ancient World what is he saying? How can something that is wise be foolish, an something that is foolish be wise? Have you ever experienced that sort of truth? When? How?
- The First Great End of the Church as per the Presbyterian Book of Order is that the church is to be about: The Proclamation of the Gospel for the Salvation of Humankind.
 - To get at what that essentially means we might need to first do some unpacking as many of the key words used in today's scriptures – and the 1st Great End of the Church – might no longer mean in our culture what they meant when the gospel was written, or when the Presbyterian Church organized over the past 250 years:
 - What does it mean to be “Christian”?
 - Why are you a “Christian”?
 - Are there other groups doing what Christians used to do and are Christians even relevant to today's world? (so what makes us different?)
 - How would you describe or explain the “Good News” message (in 7 words or less)?
 - Does the Church along have “good news” for our world? How is the Church to proclaim it?
- How is the Spirit of God inviting you – or us as a church – to act, speak, be or change through this word?