

CHURCH OF TE HEPARA PAI

Sunday 25 January 2015

Te Rātapu Tuatoru i muri i te Whakaaturanga / 3rd Sunday of the Epiphany

GOD TEACHING US



I am the Lord,
your God,
who teaches you what
is best for you,
who directs you in
the way you should go

Isaiah 48:17-18

GOD TEACHING US

SENTENCE OF THE DAY:

"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Turn away from your sins and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15)

COLLECT OF THE DAY – *Let us pray:*

Give us grace, O Lord, to obey readily the teaching of our Saviour Jesus Christ and proclaim to all people the Good News of his salvation, that we and the whole world may perceive the glory of his marvellous works; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

*God will reveal the path
of life to us.*

Psalm 16:11



God Teaching Us

The gospel passage we have read today from Mark 1 shows Jesus at the beginning of his ministry. The four men whom Jesus called - Simon, Andrew, James and John, who became Jesus' first disciples, that is, his first special students, had met him before. On the previous occasion, accounted for in John 1:35-42, Saint John the Baptist was also present and had identified Jesus to them as "*The Lamb of God*" (John 1:36), the one who would sacrifice his life to pay for the sins of mankind. So on this occasion when Jesus came and told the men that God had other work for them, they knew that they were being called by the Messiah (John 1:41); who was of the nature of God and hence was God; so they answered his call to ministry immediately (Mark 1:18, 20). They left their work, their boats and their families. The men had been fishermen. But soon, the men would work to bring people to Jesus. They needed patience and skill to catch fish in their nets. Jesus would teach them the patience and skill to bring people into his kingdom.

So what in particular did Jesus teach them? A central theme of Jesus' teaching was that he had come from God, that his teaching was from God and that through him the kingdom of God had come into the world. His teaching was so much an announcement of the good news of the kingdom that any technical difference between teaching and preaching, which was what he was doing in verse 15 of today's gospel passage, tended to disappear. So what was he teaching in this verse? That God's kingdom had arrived. That people must change their ways and believe him and his message. The kingdom of God is not a place. It is God's rule over the world. All those people who let God rule over their lives belong to his kingdom. God had always been king. But, by Jesus, he was giving people a new opportunity to turn away from their sins and to put trust in Jesus by obeying Jesus. The message was 'good news'. It helped people to have peace because God had forgiven them. It helped them to hope that they could win the struggle against sin.

The message taught by Jesus was a message of hope, but it was also a message of urgency. When he said "*The time has come, the kingdom of God has come near*" in verse 15 of today's gospel passage, this expresses a sense of urgency. He meant that people should change their way of life and come to him immediately, right now, and not delay. There is still a sense of urgency in the gospel message. God calls people to come to him today. *The time is short* (1 Cor. 7:29). Jesus is coming back soon when the life of this world as we know it will come to an end (1 Cor. 7:31) and there will not be any further opportunity to come to God.

Are you doing what you can to see that the gospel message is shared in these last days? Jesus calls all his followers to act and share the good news of salvation throughout the world. It could be spreading the good news to a neighbour or moving to another country to reach the people there; as Jonah did when he obeyed God and preached the message from God throughout a very large foreign city and the entire population of that city turned away from sin and put trust in God without delay. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, where has he called you to go?

In the name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit - amen.



The Old Testament Reading: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

A reading from Jonah chapter 3 beginning at verse 1.

Jonah Goes to Nineveh

¹ A message from the LORD came to Jonah a second time. The LORD said, ² "Go to the great city of Nineveh. Announce to its people the message I give you."

³ Jonah obeyed the LORD. He went to Nineveh. It was a very large city. In fact, it took about three days to go through it. ⁴ Jonah began by going one whole day into the city. As he went, he announced, "In 40 days Nineveh will be destroyed." ⁵ The people of Nineveh believed God's warning. So they decided not to eat any food for a while. And all of them put on the rough clothing people wear when they're sad. That's what everyone did, from the least important of them to the most important.

¹⁰ *God saw what they did. He saw that they stopped doing what was evil. So he took pity on them. He didn't destroy them as he had said he would.*

Let us all say together in te reo Māori the reading below from Jonah chapter 3 beginning at verse 1. Kia pānui tātou.

¹ Na ka puta tuarua mai te kupu a lhowa ki a Hona, i mea ia.

² Whakatika, haere ki Ninewe, ki taua pa nui, kauwhautia hoki ki reira te kauwhau e korerotia e ahau ki a koe.

³ Na whakatika ana a Hona, haere ana ki Ninewe, pera ana me ta lhowa i korero ai. Na he pa nui rawa a Ninewe, e toru nga ra e haerea ai.

⁴ Na ka timata ta Hona haere ki roto ki te pa, kotahi te ra i haere ai, kei te karanga, kei te mea, kia wha tekau ake nga ra, ka hurihia a Ninewe.

⁵ A whakapono tonu nga tangata o Ninewe ki ta te Atua; karangatia ana e ratou he nohopuku, he taratara o ratou kakahu, o nga mea rarahi o ratou tae rawa iho ki nga mea ririki.

¹⁰ A ka kite te Atua i a ratou mahi, kua tahuri atu ratou i to ratou ara kino; na ka puta ke te whakaaro o te Atua mo te kino i kiia e ia kia meatia ki a ratou; a kihai i meatia e ia.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. Thanks be to God.



The Epistle Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

A reading from 1 Corinthians chapter 7 beginning at verse 29.

²⁹ **Brothers and sisters, what I mean is that the time is short.** From now on, those who have a husband or wife should live as if they did not. ³⁰ Those who mourn should live as if they did not. Those who are happy should live as if they were not. Those who buy something should live as if it were not theirs to keep.

³¹ Those who use the things of the world should not become all wrapped up in them. The world as it now exists is passing away.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Reading: Mark 1:14-20

*The Holy Gospel according to Mark chapter 1 beginning at verse 14.
Praise and Glory to God.*

Jesus Preaches the Good News

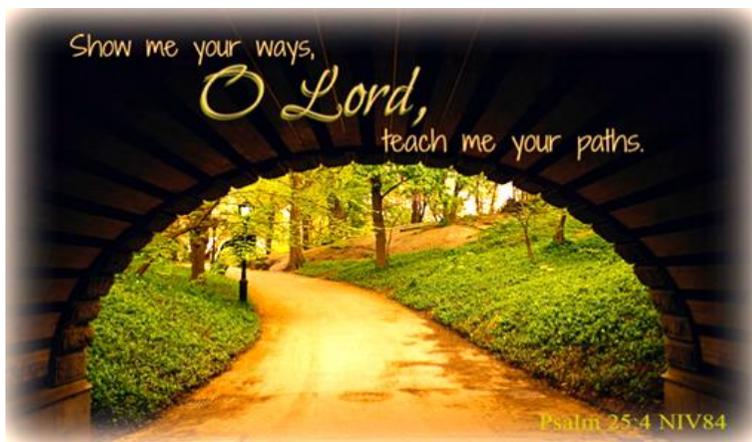
¹⁴ After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee. He preached the good news of God. ¹⁵ ***"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Turn away from your sins and believe the good news!"***

Jesus Chooses His First Disciples

¹⁶ One day Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee. There he saw Simon and his brother Andrew. They were throwing a net into the lake. They were fishermen. ¹⁷ "Come and follow me," Jesus said. "I will send you out to fish for people." ¹⁸ At once they left their nets and followed him.

¹⁹ Then Jesus walked a little farther. As he did, he saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat preparing their nets. ²⁰ Right away he called out to them. They left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men. Then they followed Jesus.

This is the Gospel of Christ. Praise to Christ, the Word.



PANUI

HUI AMORANGI AGM 2015: FRI., 13 MAR. - SUN., 15 MAR., 2015.

