

Scripture passages: Mark 1:14-20, Luke 9:1-6 (Matthew 28:16-20)

A thought about disciples...

The word we translate as “disciple” in the New Testament is “mathetes” and it literally means “learner”. But not learning in terms of remembering information, more life long learning: changing, growing, stretching, becoming more like Jesus. Jesus chooses 12 disciples, has an inner circle of 3, sends out 72, has a further crowd who follow, and has a group of friends (eg Mary, Martha and Lazarus). Jesus invests in all these people, making the disciples before finally asking them to go and make disciples themselves once the Holy Spirit has come at Pentecost (see Matthew 28) – giving the disciples the same relationship with the Holy Spirit that Jesus has. I would see all of this as a plan to create the kind of church which we have been inspired by, described in Acts chapter 2. These two passages from the Gospels show Jesus first words to his disciples in calling them in Mark, and the first time they are sent out in Luke. This learning process appear to begin with Jesus proclaiming it is *time to repent and believe*.

It is worth noting before we continue that Jesus lost one (Judas – Matthew 28 says that Jesus met with the 11!), had to go back for Simon/Peter who had gone back to his old life ashamed that he could not keep his promise to Jesus. And the rest had run away and left Jesus all alone when he needed them the most.

Time to repent and believe

What do these words mean to you?

- Time
- Repent
- Believe

In the passage:

Time ‘kairos’ means an important moment, which makes you stop and reflect, a ‘lightbulb moment’ of revelation, a ‘penny drop’ moment of understanding, or a time when you make life-changing decision or change of attitude. Could be getting ill, feeling great about something, questioning how you reacted to something, receiving news that will affect the way you live your life. The word here is not ‘chronos’ meaning the passing and recording of time.

Take a moment to think back to significant moments in your life, would you describe any of them as ‘kairos moments’?

In the New Testament: Acts chapter 9 when Saul is stopped by the blinding light on the road to Damascus is possibly the most famous ‘kairos moment’ in history. Acts 10 where Peter sees a vision and goes to Cornelius’ house would be another of a different kind. Notice there is no suggestion that Peter has done or is doing anything wrong in this story, but he does need an important change of perspective. These kind of experiences are the kind that happen once or twice in a lifetime. They do not need to be as dramatic as the road to Damascus because most of us do not need that level of event to get our attention! John chapter 21 can be seen as another ‘kairos moment’ for Peter, this time when he has messed everything up – the important moment happens while eating fish for breakfast on a beach which was very ordinary especially for a fisherman.

Often the concept of a Kairos moment has been attached only to these kind of huge, sometimes dramatic, life changing moments which are very rare. These are of great importance, but the ‘time’/‘kairos’ which Jesus speaks about so early in Mark’s Gospel implies something which happens far more often and is about life-long learning. So

Take another moment and think back over the last week/month in your life, were there any moments which just made you want to stop and think?

Kairos moments can also be the realisation that you have made the same mistake *again*, or found yourself in the same uncomfortable situation *again*. Can you think of any moments like this in the last week/month?

If there are lots of these kinds of moments, not hugely dramatic in any way, but moments where God is holding out the offer of learning more about what it is to follow Him and be a part of building His Kingdom; then this sounds more like the way that God works in us than holding out for the great blinding light once in a lifetime. It means that

if we miss one, another opportunity will come along. Somebody described this as an everyday pattern of having the “opportunity to step further into the Kingdom of God... where our reality and God’s reality collide”.

Repent

(Try to think of repentance as reflecting on the what has made you stop and reflect whether you have done something wrong or not).

‘metanoia’: change mind & heart, see things completely differently, fundamental shift, turn completely around. Change of inner being that leads to outward reality. (in Luke chapter 11 Jesus speaks about cleaning the inner of cup as well as outside). It is about change from the inside out. Change of attitude, understanding which results in a change in the way you do things.

In the context of Kairos time it means observing, reflecting, discussing and asking the question “what is God saying to you”?

Believe

‘pisteuo’: certainty, foundation, solid. Active transformation. Like love, it’s a verb... a doing word! Certainty developed so strongly in us, that we cannot help but do something.

In the context of a Kairos moment and repenting it means planning, accounting, acting differently and asking the question ‘what are you going to do about it’

It’s time to repent and believe

Take some time quietly to think about a Kairos moment.

Reflect and ask yourself the question “what is God saying to you?”.

(If it involves something you have done wrong or left undone, ask for forgiveness knowing it is fully given)

Now ask yourself the question “what are you going to do about it?”.

Having spent some time quietly, give an opportunity for people to share if it is appropriate. Pray with each other as appropriate.

Jesus sends his disciples out

Read Luke 9:1-6, the first time Jesus sends his disciples out to do the things he has been teaching them. It appears that getting to this point is the result of spending time repenting and believing, and that doing what he asks is a Kairos moment in itself. Be challenged by the remit Jesus gives them, and inspired by the implication that their mission was successful - the feeding of the 5000 happens because so many people have heard about what they did on this mission.

(In Luke 10 Jesus sends out 72 with similar instructions and this time we are specifically told the results of you want further challenge and inspiration!)