

* DAY 1 *

Repent and Believe

MARK 1:1–15

That same God who proclaimed the law with sound of trumpet, with lightnings and with thunders, speaks to us more gently, but still as divinely, through his only begotten Son, when he says to us, ‘Repent, and believe the gospel.’

Read Mark 1:1–15

Why do you think Mark began his Gospel by referring to Old Testament prophecies?

Why do you think Jesus linked together the need for repentance with the need for belief?

True Faith Follows True Repentance

This brings me to the second half of the command, which is, 'Believe the gospel.' Faith means trust in Christ. Now, I must again remark that some have preached this trust in Christ so well and so fully, that I can but admire their faithfulness and bless God for them; yet there is a difficulty and a danger; it may be that in preaching simple trust in Christ as being the way of salvation, they may omit to remind the sinner that no faith can be genuine but such as is perfectly consistent with repentance for past sin; for my text seems to me to put it thus: no repentance is true but that which consorts with faith; no faith is true but that which is linked with a hearty and sincere repentance on account of past sin. So then, dear friends, those people who have a faith which allows them to think lightly of past sin, have the faith of devils, and not the faith of God's elect.

Careless Faith is No Faith

Those who say, 'Oh, as for the past, that is nothing; Jesus Christ has washed all that away;' and can talk about all the crimes of their youth, and the iniquities of their riper years, as if they were mere trifles, and never think of shedding a tear; never feel their souls ready to burst because they should have been such great offenders – such men who can trifle with the past, and even fight their battles o'er again when their passions are too cold for new rebellions – I say that such who think sin a trifle and have never sorrowed on account of it, may know that their faith is not genuine. Such men as have a faith which allows them to live carelessly in the present, who ... go into worldly company and enjoy the carnal pleasures

and the lusts of the flesh, such men are liars; they have not the faith which will save the soul. They have a deceitful hypocrisy; they have not the faith which will bring them to heaven.

Apply

In our current age, do you think we place enough emphasis on the need for repentance?

What are the dangers of a lack of sorrow over sin?

Pray

Pray that God would bring to mind anything for which you have not repented.

Give thanks to God that he forgives all who come to him in repentance.

