

**Time of Fulfillment**      First Week of Ordinary Time      Monday, January 14, 2019      Heb  
1:1-6;      **Mk 1:14-20**      (Jesus says just be open, let God come.)

**“This is the time of fulfillment.”**

Unfortunately we have to deal with the limitations of language in speaking about the word of God. And this very significant statement becomes dull in time because we hear it so often, but it is very provocative and pregnant.

Now that is really a mouthful if we think about how old the earth is, how old the universe is. It’s not more than 14 billion years; it’s 13.8. So for billions of years the universe has been developing, growing, forming galaxies, and so on. Then this earth is at least 4 1/2 billion years old. It’s gone through all kinds of changes, and just in the last few years humanity has appeared. Scientists rightly say that there is no purpose in nature. This is correct; there is no purpose that can be discovered in nature or from nature. But **there is purpose in the creation, but there is purpose that transcends what we can see with our senses, but it does not escape our minds if we apply them. So toward this purpose the coming of Jesus is the time of fulfillment.** What this is all about, at least what this earth is all about, is coming to fulfillment in Christ. So that’s astonishing, but we hear it all the time, so we are not astonished.

Then he says, **“The Kingdom of God is at hand.”** Now this idea of a kingdom of God, a place, a time, a realm, where justice and goodness and peace in every way would reign, that was a fond hope for the people of the Old Testament. Jesus says, well that time is right now. You can reach out and touch it. Well that’s what he said, but what happened? Have we seen this? Perhaps no one reached out, or too few.

“The Kingdom of God is at hand, so **repent.**” Again, linguistically this is not very elegant. The word in Greek actually means **“find a new way of looking, and find a new way of thinking”**

**“and believe in the Gospel.”** Well of course, again, the word gospel: does that mean Matthew or Mark or Luke or John? No, it means **the message that Jesus brought**, the message of divine favor and goodness, the message of eternal life, the message of God’s good will toward his creation, and in particular toward humanity, in spite of humanity’s ill will toward each other and God. That’s the gospel.

**It isn’t exactly plausible. It breaks into reality and it requires faith.** It’s not just an opinion that seems pretty reasonable; no, it doesn’t. It borders on the absurd, but it is **what Jesus proclaims with his whole being, and lives out**, dies for, and is raised up to witness to: the goodness of God, the power of eternal life, the undying generosity and mercy of God. All that is the gospel. But in order to believe in it, **we have to repent.** That means we have to change our way of thinking, meaning **we have to move away from evaluating everything on the basis of what we see or on the basis of what we experience or on the basis of what we feel.** Our senses and our emotions are not a valid foundation of reality. They are at best peripheral, at worst deceiving. **Reality comes to us from God because God created everything.**

**And now is the time of fulfillment for God to open our minds and our hearts to his own plan for us, his purpose for us.** And ultimately this is all fulfilled **by our becoming receptive.** There is no agenda. Jesus does not give us an agenda. **Jesus says just be open, let God come.**