

A DEVOTIONAL SERIES ON THE GOSPEL ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

THE TIME IS NEAR

Mark 1:14-15 “Jesus went into Galilee, where he preached God’s Good News. “The time promised by God has come at last!” He announced. “The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!” (New Living Translation)

Telling time is important. It is taught to our children early in their lives. Virtually every adult, teen and most children have watches, access to calendars and other time telling devices. Telling time accurately permits one to live in the now and prepare for the future.

Your ESV Bible translates Mark 1:15 with the words “the time if fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.” The New Living translation translates the opening words of verse 15 as, “The time promised by God has come at last! The Kingdom of God is near!” The ability to tell time is emphasized in both of these translations, isn’t it?

To understand the reference to time in these translations you need to refer back to when Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the Temple to present Him to the Lord. While there a “righteous and devout man” by the name of Simeon and the “prophetess Anna,” through the power of the Holy Spirit, recognized Jesus as God’s promised Savior, hence the reference in Mark to “the time is fulfilled,” the time promised by God has come at last.!” (Luke 2:22ff) They recognized that Jesus had come into the world to usher in God’s kingdom of grace and mercy.

Jesus, in His public preaching and teaching, told His hearers they needed to know what time it was. He was not referring to clock or calendar time, but rather to God sending Him to save the people of the world from His condemnation of their sins and earn for them eternal life in heaven. While Jesus was on earth some were led by the Holy Spirit to believe in Him, and thus were able to know the “time” of God’s favor for sinners had come. They were, in a sense able to read God’s clock and calendar.

The clock continues to run. The pages of the calendar continue to turn. Time is coming to the end. The Bible says it will come to an end “like a thief in the night.”

(2 Peter 3:10) In the same way as God prepared through the word of the Old Testament Simeon and Anna for the time when Christ came into the world as its Savior, God prepares you for Jesus to return to “judge the living and the dead at the end of time.” (Apostle’s Creed) “Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Corinthians 6:2)

Prayer: Holy Spirit, grant me faith eyes to believe God’s word that the time for this world to end is fast approaching. Prepare me for that time by strengthening my faith in Jesus through whom alone on that day God will accept me in body and soul for all eternity. In Jesus’ holy name. Amen.

The day is surely drawing near When Jesus, God’s anointed,
In all His power shall appear As judge whom God appointed.
Then fright shall banish idle mirth, And flames on flames shall ravage earth
As Scripture long has warned us.

The final trumpet then shall sound And all the earth be shaken,
And all who rest beneath the ground Shall their sleep awaken.
But all who live will in that hour, By God’s almighty, boundless pow’r,
Be changed at His commanding.

O Jesus Christ, do not delay, But hasten our salvation;
We often tremble on our way In fear and tribulation
O hear and grant our fervent plea: Come, mighty judge, and set us free
From death and ev’ry evil.
(LSB 508, vv 1,2,7)