

The Offer- Mark 1:15-17

NOTE: This is my favourite message at the moment. In 2013 I shared this with 20 hardened policemen and every one of them received Christ as their Lord and Saviour. I also shared it at a barrio in Cebu, Philippines- everyone responded (approximately 200 people) and a church was planted. There is a lot going on in this message so if you are a novice preacher this message is probably not for you- YET. Because this is longer than most of my messages and has a lot going on I have committed it to memory. Committing a message to memory allows the message to flow better and lets you maintain eye contact with your audience. If you're experienced and like a challenge then this message would serve you well.

If you watch T.V for any length of time it won't be long before someone selling one product or another makes you an offer. In fact the people in the infomercials say things like, "But wait there's more" or "Buy one and get one free," BUT EXPERIENCE TELLS ME MOST OFFER'S AREN'T AS GOOD AS THEY APPEAR. Today I want to share another offer, but unlike others you've ever heard before this one truly is "The World's Greatest Offer"- and yes there are one or two catches in this one as well.

What is the offer? Well, first let me ask another question: If you'd been Jesus and you'd waited 30 years to preach, what would your first sermon have been? Here it is:

John 1:14, 15 says, *"Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'"*

And then following on from there verses 16, 17 say, *"As He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.'"*

Today we're going to examine some of the key words and concepts in these verses. The first word we are going to look at is

Repent: It sounds very old fashioned doesn't it? But the truth is repentance brings feelings of freshness and newness into your life. That's because repentance is an opportunity to face up to the wrong in our lives and turn from it so we can be forgiven. It is a conscious decision to turn away from sin as an act of your will.

What is sin? It's disobeying God. It's the wrong things we say do and think. Perhaps you struggle seeing yourself as a sinner in need of repentance and forgiveness, let me help you.

Who has heard of the Ten Commandments (explain what they are)

The 9th Commandment says, “*You must not lie.*” This includes what we call white lies and exaggeration- because truth is the whole truth and nothing but the truth or it is just a lie. Raise your hand if you have never told a lie (very few hands if any will go up). So when you tell a lie, what does that make you?

The 8th Commandment says, “*You must not steal.*” That does not only include things like cheating on taxes or robbing a bank but includes stealing other things such as a pen, a pencil, or a piece of fruit as a child. Raise your hand if you have never stolen anything ever in your life -So in Gods eyes, what does that make you?

The 7th commandment says, “*You must not commit adultery.*” Most say they have never done that before. But, Jesus said, “If you even look at a woman (or man for that matter) with lust in your heart you have already committed adultery with them in your heart”. If you have ever looked at a woman or man, with lust in your heart, you are an adulterer in Gods eyes.

The 6th Commandment says, “*You must not murder.*” But Jesus said if you hate someone even if it's your own brother you've already murdered them in your heart. The dictionary defines hate as an intense dislike; so now put up your hand if you have never hated someone before, “No Hands, so what does that make you?”

Okay we have only looked at 4 of the Ten Commandments –there is still six we haven't done. But you have already admitted that you are a liar, a thief an adulterer and murderer at heart. The Bible says, “*The person who breaks just one of Gods laws is guilty of breaking all of them.*” So if God were to judge you by His Ten Commandments would you be guilty or innocent? (Listen to their admission of guilt and agree with them)So when you die, where would you go, heaven or hell?

That's Right you would go to hell!!! Your only option now is to Repent and...

Note: In the Philippines, it would be useful to use the first and second commandments and apply them to the Filipino Catholic practice of worshipping barrio saints, praying to statues, wearing fetishes and consulting shaman for cures etc... If you do this though, be prepared not only for many salvations but also for the fallout- criticism, ridicule and maybe even worse.

Believe the good News: The Good News is, even though we are deserving of hell, Jesus, sinless and perfect as He was, chose to die a criminal's death in our place on a cross taking the punishment you and I deserved so we could be forgiven. BUT WAIT THERES MORE!!! ... He rose from the dead three days later proving that He is God and has the power to change you from the inside out. Next Jesus said...

I will make you: God always wants to make something wonderful out of our lives. There was once a man called Jeremiah. One day the Lord said to Jeremiah, “Go down to the potter's house, and there I will speak to you.” So Jeremiah went down

to the potter's house, and saw the potter making a pot. But the pot he was making did not come out like he wanted it to. So the potter squashed the clay and began to remake the pot. Then God told Jeremiah *"go to the Israelites and say, 'as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand.'"*...God wants to re-make us.

There is a story about a guy who owned a pig called Harley. Harley was his best friend. One day the guy was watching Harley rolling around in the mud and filth and he said to himself, "Here I am living in luxury and my best friend lives in a pig sty." So the man took Harley the pig out of the sty, cleaned him up and gave him the run of his house, thinking the pig would rise to the occasion and act like a human. When the man got up the next morning his house was a mess. But he didn't get upset; instead he decided to take Harley the pig to the best restaurant and give him the best food and the best wine hoping Harley would change and act like a human. So he cleaned Harley up again, put a suit and a tie on him and took him to a restaurant.

They had an awesome time, but when they got home Harley got out of the car and went right back to the sty to roll around in the mud and filth again...Because it's the nature of a pig to act like a pig-that's what pigs do; they roll around in the mud and filth. Human beings can't change either and we have our own mud and filth. Jesus said, *"For from within, out of a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. 23 All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you."* Mark 7:21-23 NLT... So we need a new nature... Jesus agrees He said, *"You must be born-again."* But we can't go back into our mother's womb; it's a different kind of birth-a spiritual birth. Jesus said; *"Humans give life to their children. Yet only God's Spirit can change you into a child of God."* John 3:6 CEV

God wants to remake you, reshape you into a true child of God because he loves you and has work for you to do. He said... **I will make you fishers of men.** Most of you have mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, husbands and wives, sons and daughters that don't know God- and yet He wants to save them to and needs you to help fish them from the jaws of hell.

Who gives this offer of Salvation?

Jesus 'the Son of God'

Napoleon said, "I know men and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man."

A verse in the Bible says, *"Christ is the visible image of the invisible God."* (Col. 1:15)

One of His own followers a guy called Thomas called Him, *"My Lord and my God!"* (Jn. 20:28) He even worshipped Him-and Jesus didn't stop Him.

The Apostle Peter said, *"There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved."* Acts 4:12

Jesus healed the sick He raised the dead and He cast out demons, He even claimed Himself to be the Way the Truth and the Life. Because Gods Law required a sacrifice for sin, Jesus chose to be that sacrifice and took the punishment we deserved and died on the cruel cross so we can be forgiven. But He rose from the dead three days later to prove that he is God and has the power to change us from the inside out.

Jesus is not on the cross any more, that's why the Christian cross is an empty cross. A dead Jesus is powerless to help you. A dead Jesus can't save you or change you or even answer your prayers. But Jesus is alive and because He is alive He can come into your homes, your schools, factories and offices He can save and change anyone that turns to Him

When is the offer? It's Now!!! God Says, *"Now is the day of salvation."* 2
Corinthians 6:2

For whom is the offer?

Jesus said, *"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."* John 7:37

It is for anyone, so it's for you.

(Call for a response)
