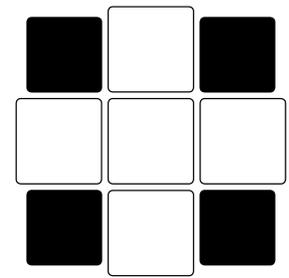


Mark's Witness to the First Advent

Scripture: **Matthew 1:14–15**

Series: **Advent 2018**

Sunday, December 9, 2018



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Overview

The coming of Christ comforts and confronts the sinner.

Between the Old and New Testaments, there is a 400-year silence. God's people have been tossed around from one nation to another, continuously under foreign rule. They have disobeyed God's laws and have broken their covenant. During this season of despair and silence, Israel waits for deliverance. **The coming of Christ calls for repenting and rejoicing.** Like Israel, we have broken the covenant and God's law. We deserve the just punishment due for our iniquity. Without the Messiah, we would have no deliverance.

Corroborating Texts

Malachi 2:17; Habakkuk 2:3; Galatians 4:4–5; Psalm 5:2; Mark 6:7–13; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 9:15; Psalm 38; Malachi 4

Discussion Questions

1. What are some holiday joys you are looking forward to? Any holiday pains on the horizon?
2. Israel had been in a season of despair and silence for 400 years. Have you experienced a season of silence and/or despair? How can your community group come alongside you during this season?
3. Take a look at Malachi 2:17. Israel had been in this season because of their a.) disregarding of God's law; b.) delighting in wickedness; and c.) doubting God's judgment. How do you disregard God's law, delight in your wickedness, and doubt God's judgement?
4. Jesus' announcement that the "time is fulfilled" is a powerful statement. How have you viewed this announcement in the past? How has your view changed? Why should this statement lead to encouragement and joy?
5. Jesus also announces that the Kingdom of God is at hand. How does the Old Testament portray God as King? How does Jesus fulfill Israel's expectations of the Kingdom? How does he correct their view (and ours)?
6. What is repentance? How is repentance key to Mark's Gospel? What should repentance look like? Why don't we like to repent? What does repentance have to do with Advent? What are some "actual sins" of which you need to repent?
7. What does it mean to believe? What are we called to believe in? How does repenting lead to rejoicing? Why does the coming of our Savior elicit joy? What joy do we have when Jesus returns?