

What do you think Jesus sounded like when he preached? "Now is the time. God is actively reigning right here! So believe this great news change and change your life." [lecture mode? monotone? excitement?] Jesus was preaching in a time when roving preachers were a dime a dozen (and they still aren't they? – how many people are preaching this morning within a two-mile radius of St Catherine's). Jonah was so effective that he converted an entire city including the king in one day. I don't think there's a preacher that convert Mendon much less Las Vegas or New York in a day. Yet with no advertising, no marketing strategy, no microphone, only word of mouth, yet Jesus was attracting crowds. Somehow he was so effective, so charismatic and had such a dramatic message that when he invited Simon and Andrew and James and John to drop what they were doing and follow him, they did!

How would you respond if you received an invitation to the Academy Awards along with an invitation beforehand to sit at the table for dinner with your favorite actress or actor? Would you be excited? Would you tell other people about it? Yet the message we've been given and the invitation we've received is so much more! "The time is now. God is actively reigning right here! So believe this great news and change your life!"

God has called everyone one of us here, individually, by name, to be a part of this. And you, and you and you, have been called by name to be a part of that. You are invited to be part of God's active reigning here – not as a bystander, not as a spectator, but an active participant in what God is trying to accomplish in our world.

When did that call happen for you? I don't mean when did your parents have you baptized? When did you realize that God was right there with you saying, "I want **you** to be part of my great adventure." Who was instrumental in that calling for you? For Allan, our catechumen, I think he'll tell you it is his wife; for Katie, it's her boyfriend. For me, it was hearing Gospel passages about Jesus calling the disciples. Truly, when I heard them in church, I heard them as if my name was being read out loud, like, how could you now hear that?" When did **you** feel it, when did you know it in your gut? I know it's there, because it happened, but do you remember?

When I remember that, then my enthusiasm revives. I don't preach because it's a job; I preach because my passion is my relationship with Jesus and I want that for you too. I want you to have the consolation and challenge and healing and excitement and mercy and satisfaction that I've had throughout my life, because Jesus has called us to be part of the most important things that are happening in the world today!

"The time is now. God is actively reigning right here! So believe this great news and change your life!" If we trust the man who has told us this good news, then we'll be anxious and enthusiastic to tell others, not keep it to ourselves. We'll put our faith in him, trust his message, and naturally adjust our lives so that we can follow him wholeheartedly.

So are you excited? Are you enthusiastic? Have you been radicalized yet? Can people see that you're a passionate follower of Jesus? If you were arrested today for being his disciple, is there enough evidence to convict you?