

According to Sheehan, Jesus message was different from John the Baptizer's. It was more focused on the present rather than on the future catastrophic apocalypse. Jesus message was first in twofold offer:

1. **The time is fulfilled.** 2. The Kingdome of God is at hand. Then a twofold response: 3. Repent. 4. Believe in good news. Sheehan paraphrased "the time is fulfilled" to "time's up"! The time of decision is *now*. The Greek word here *kairos* refers not to just any time but to a time fraught with significance, a turning point in time, a time for decision. The time to decide is now. But what should we decide about?

He paraphrases "**the kingdom of God**" as "the power of God." The power of God is at hand. It is available to you now: You can, as it were, reach out and grab it. The power of God is *entirely for human beings*. The kingdom of God means that *God is empowering us*, here and now. Jesus proclaims an existential new creation, just as the first creation empowered humankind to possess and perfect the world. "God's empowerment is yours for the asking." You must decide now whether to avail yourself of God's empowering of your personal and social life.

But then comes the expected response, the two conditions you must fulfill in order to receive this divine empowerment. **Repent**; the Greek verb that Mark uses is *metanoete*, made up of two semantic elements: *meta*, which connotes turning completely around, and then *noeo*, which refers to the way you see the world, how you think and act. *Metanoete* does not mean "repent of your sins" and beat your breast. Rather, it means; radically change *who* you are and *how* you live. It tells us to make a complete about-face in our lives and to start heading in a different direction – radically changing your life into one of justice and mercy, which are the climax of Jesus' message, the most difficult to live out – and the only thing that finally counts.

Believe in good news: "Be your life on it." That's the force of the Greek verb *pisteuete*, not to have faith *in* something, not to *believe* what has been said, but to cast in your lot existentially with a radical new way of living – trusting, without evidence, that *is* the best way to live (Mark 1: 15). ¹

¹ Thomas Sheehan. *What comes after Christianity* in the Fourth R Magazine of Westar Institute Vol. 26 (Salem OR: Sep-Oct '13), 6.