

Repent and Believe! Discussion and Reflection Questions

This reflection will help youth consider what it means to repent. “What do I need to change to become closer to Jesus?”

Imagine this. You are sitting in the park, minding your own business. Somebody comes up to you and says “Repent and believe!”

- What would your reaction be?
- Would you be offended?
- Would you be attracted to this person?
- What would the word “repent” make you think?

Today’s gospel reading is not long. This one mentions the temptation in the desert, but does not focus on it. Instead, it seems to tell us that Jesus’ reaction to his experience in the desert is a call to action.

Read [Mark 1:12-15](#)

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan. He was among wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him.

After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: “This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

[Mark 1:12-15](#)

It is interesting that this mentions that John had been arrested. Jesus knows his message will not be well received by those in power. But he moves forward anyway.

Most people do not want to be told to repent. It is like saying “The way you are living now is not right. You need to change.”

According to the dictionary, repent means

To feel or express sincere regret or remorse about one’s wrongdoing or sin

And there is a second part to this message. Believe!

So often the world tells us to believe in ourselves. But this is not the “believe” Jesus is inviting us to. Jesus is telling us to believe in the gospel, the good news.

<https://young-catholics.com/7625/repent-and-believe-discussion-and-reflection-questions/>

- What is the “good news”?

The good news is that we are God’s beloved children. We do not earn His love. He gives it to us freely. But our actions often show that we don’t really believe this 100%.

If we really absolutely knew that God loved us, and if that were enough for us, then the things which drive us to sin would become less important in our lives.

Our need to impress others and to boost our own image at the expense of others would go away. Because if God loves us, why do we spend so much time and effort seeking the approval of others. If we really thought that God cares for us and wants what is best for us, then we would not be so anxious.

- How might our lives change if we really lived in the complete freedom of knowing that we are God’s beloved children?
- How would this impact your relationships with others?

Lent is just beginning. You might be thinking about what you want to do to this Lent in terms of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. When you are considering this, think about the dual message in today’s gospel. Will your Lenten commitments help you repent and believe? If not, consider doing something which will help you follow today’s gospel message.