

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

Week 3: The Catch of Your Life

Last week we learned about Jesus' humanity; how he suffered, was tempted and how he needed community. We also saw how he modelled an "other-centred" life. This week we look at who Jesus chose as his followers and what sort of kingdom he called them to be a part of.

## 1. The King Announces His Kingdom and it is Not What We Expect

- Read Mark 1:14-15

The Kingdom had to be announced *and* demonstrated, not just one or the other. Jesus preached *and* modelled what the Kingdom was about. He did not usher in the political movement that the Israelites were hoping for. Instead, he arrived with a regular bunch of people and announced that the kingdom was available to all who would receive it. The kingdom was not what they were expecting because:

- **It wasn't filled with pomp and ceremony.** The kingdom seems to value faithfulness over fame. So for most of us, being part of God's Kingdom will be living faithfully for Jesus in obscurity until he returns.
  - **It was immediate and yet not yet complete – "Now not yet".** Though the Kingdom was available to those who would receive it, it was only the beginning. The kingdom will only be fully realised at Jesus' return. God, in his grace, is giving many more people an opportunity to repent and believe that they too might be added to his kingdom. Our role as we wait is to live our lives in such a way that we give people a glimpse as to what the kingdom of God is like.
- ❖ Q: If Jesus was born into obscurity and lived the life of a servant, should we be okay with living the same kind of life? Explain.
- ❖ Q: If God has given certain Christians a measure of fame, how do you think they should live that out and why?
- ❖ Q: Why is it not enough to just demonstrate what the kingdom is like through the way in which we live our lives without proclaiming it as a message? (We tend to want to either preach without having to live it, or we live it without being bold enough to preach/explain it).

## 2. The King Calls Followers for the Kingdom and They Aren't Who We Expect

- Read Mark 1:16-19

Jesus singled out and called men to follow him, which was a regular custom for a Jewish rabbi. But he didn't approach the wealthy or well educated or even the well behaved. He chose people that were not held in high regard. This is good news for us, because despite our position in life, most of us know that we are completely unworthy of being called by God. Jesus shows us here that no-one is too unworthy or too unlikely to be called. Our only role in the process is to respond to his call with repentance and faith (Mark 1:14 & Ephesians 2:8). When Jesus calls people to follow him, he is not asking them to make a decision, but instead he is calling them into an entirely new life.

- ❖ Q: Do we subtly believe that Jesus only calls certain types of people? What type of people do you imagine Jesus would never really bother with? (Many religious people feel that they are somehow worthy of being called by Jesus, while those with very immoral lives feel they could never be called. Both of these are not true. Jesus calls every type of person regardless of where their lives are at the time. He meets us where we are at).
- ❖ Q: Did the disciples ask Jesus if they could follow him, or did he single them out and call them by his own initiative? Is this the same pattern he follows today? How do we know? (Read Ephesians 1: 3-5)
- ❖ Q: Why is the call of Jesus more than just a *decision* we make?
- ❖ Q: What do you think the life of a disciple of Jesus should look like today? How are you doing personally on this journey at the moment?

## 3. Our Response to the Announcement and Call Should be an Immediate "YES"

- Read Mark 1:20

The kingdom is here. Jesus has called you. It's not up to us to decide how much of Jesus and his kingdom we want. We are either in or we are not. The disciples were so drawn to him that they dropped their lives immediately and followed him. Jesus calls each one of us to salvation, to baptism, to repentance, to generosity, to honesty, to discipline and to many other things. It comes with a cost but it is worth it.

- ❖ Q: What is your response to Jesus' call on your life? Are you actively following him, not just across the line of faith, but in every single area of your life? Is he the master of your life? Does he get the final say on where you invest your time, treasure and talent?
- ❖ Q: What things are you putting off that he has called you to do and what things are you holding onto that he has called you to let go of?

