

Introduction: Pg. \_\_\_\_\_

## {P} Mark 1:14-20 (text displayed)

I want these words to really sink into your souls. That's why I'm going to read them again in the NLT.

### **MARK 1:14-20 (New Living Translation)**

**14** Later on, after John was arrested, Jesus went into Galilee, where he preached God's Good News. **15** "The time promised by God has come at last!" he announced. "The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!"

**16** One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. **17** Jesus called out to them, "Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!" **18** And they left their nets at once and followed him.

**19** A little farther up the shore Jesus saw Zebedee's sons, James and John, in a boat repairing their nets. **20** He called them at once, and they also followed him, leaving their father, Zebedee, in the boat with the hired men.

### **"Drop the Nets" Mark 1:14-20**

These moments mark the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. His actions set the tone for his mission and his words extend a very clear call, explaining what it means to follow him fully!

It is critical we not only understand what Jesus is saying, but weigh them honestly against the commitment of our hearts and reality of our lives. In the quietness of our own souls, consider: Am I answering Jesus' call to follow him fully?

#### Following Jesus fully does not happen because... (are you ready?)

- You call yourself a Christian...
- You have been baptized... or because
- You live a moral life. Following Jesus fully does not happen simply because
- You read your Bible and pray...
- You are a part of this church, are a leader in this church, or even because
- You followed Jesus fully in the past, surrendering everything to him.

These words tell us: if we are going to follow Jesus fully, we must do 3 things: Answer the call of Christ. Live in "the multiplication middle," and pay the price of discipleship.

#### **1. Answer the call of Christ. (1:14-17)**

When I say "answer" the call of Christ, I'm talking about responding favorably to his call with resolute action.

Jesus puts forth two calls, which are really one and the same CALL, "Repent and believe in the gospel (15). "Follow me." (17)

Before we look at each of them, we need to understand two key terms: GOSPEL & KINGDOM.

#### **What is the GOSPEL?**

The gospel is the good news that God is redeeming people for himself and restoring his good creation through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- The Gospel is God's gospel. It's his news. It announces what he has done for us!
- It is the gospel of God because it is news about him and comes from him!

### What is the KINGDOM?

The kingdom refers to the reign of God as he accomplishes his redemptive purposes and pours out his blessing on his people.

- The "kingdom" is mentioned 126 times in the NT. Notice how proclaiming the gospel of God and proclaiming the kingdom go hand in hand. In fact, Jesus speaks of "the gospel of the kingdom" in Matthew 24:14,
- When Jesus says "The time is fulfilled," he is saying a new age has dawned.
  - "The age of promise is giving way to the age of fulfillment." (Strauss)
  - The time of salvation has arrived (Galatians 4:4).
  - God's redemptive plan, first prophesied in Genesis 3:15, is unfolding before their eyes!
- When Jesus says, "the kingdom of God is at hand,"
  - The kingdom has drawn near because the King arrived in the person of Jesus Christ.
  - Everything Jesus says and does will reveal what God's kingdom is like: truth, righteousness & justice; removing suffering, and restoring our relationship with God.
  - As we see throughout the New Testament, the kingdom is both "now" AND "not yet." It is "at hand!" but won't be fully realized until Jesus returns.

T: This urgent announcement demands an appropriate response!

### Repent and Believe the Gospel

- Repentance means turning from our sin. Though God reigns over everything, we do not naturally acknowledge and submit to his authority. We want authority. We want to reign.
- Believing the gospel means turning back to God through Christ. It's not simply agreeing with facts about Jesus, but trusting in his life, death and resurrection to deliver us from our sin and grant us eternal life.
- Repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin. As Kim Huat Tan says: "we repent believingly, and we believe repentantly."
- Listen: You will not enter the kingdom and receive salvation unless you repent and believe.
  - If you've never made a conscious decision to say, "God, forgive me of my sin, forgive me from turning away from you. I'm coming back. I'm turning to you. I'm placing my trust in what Jesus did for me in his death and resurrection. Save me. Make me new! You are my KING!"
  - Cry out to God today, NOW!
- Repentance and faith are required to continue following Jesus daily.
  - If you are in Christ, you ARE LOVED. If you are in Christ, the Father IS PLEASED with you and takes great delight in you, BUT that does not mean he loves or take pleasure in everything we do.
  - In fact, our sin grieves him. It brings him great sorrow. That is why we must practice continual repentance and faith.
  - Every day, we must see, confess, yes, hate our sin, and turn from our sin. That's why our prayer of confession today around racial justice is so important. That's why confession should consistently make it's way into our focused, face to face time with God.
  - And every day, we must continue to trust Jesus and depend on him in everything!
- He says, "repent and believe," AND...

### Follow Me

- The second call further explains what it means to repentant and believe. Turning from self and sin means turning to him!
- To answer the call to "repent and believe" is to answer Jesus' call to "follow me."

T: This good news invites us to a person!... which leads us to our second truth. If you really want to follow Jesus, fully, completely, you must....

## 2. Live in the multiplication middle (1:17)

### Read 1:17

Having announced the kingdom is at hand, Jesus then seeks to call people into his kingdom community.

As he was passing along the Sea of Galilee, a large body of water (14 miles long & 6 miles wide) known for its fishing industry, he sees Simon & Andrew, two brothers casting a net into the sea.

Jesus then has the audacity to interrupt their work day and say: "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men."

At the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus calls people to discipleship (to learn from him and follow him in all of life). Jesus invites us to what my friend Bryan Shippey (shoutout Banner Hill Church - Framingham) calls the Multiplication Middle.

1 Jesus: Follow Me. Jesus is always the Leader.

2 YOU: Following Jesus... and Pouring into...

3 OTHERS: Because Jesus says, "When you follow me, you will be compelled to help others follow me."

Where does that put us? In the multiplication middle. Let's consider each component.

### The Multiplication Middle

- "Follow me." - Jesus multiples himself into us.

There are several important things to note here:

- The two words "follow me" translate a Greek idiom (literally translated as) "come after me." Jesus is calling his disciples to follow his ways. Discipleship is "a relationship of learning from a master teacher." (Strauss)
- But... Jesus actions are unique in at least two ways, both revealing the heart of God. Danny Akin explains when he says, "In the rabbinic schools of the day, the aspiring student sought out the respected rabbi. Further, the student's allegiance was to the Law, not to the teacher. Jesus' form of discipleship is fundamentally different! Jesus seeks them out, and their allegiance will be to Him."
- In his grace, Jesus calls us TO HIMSELF
- Mark Edwards says: "Discipleship is repeatedly defined in Mark by simple proximity to Jesus: being with him (3:13), sitting around him (3:34, 4:10), hearing him (4:1-20), and following him 'on the way' (1:16-20; 10:52).

That's why our 2021 Vision focus centers around our church collectively spending 1,000,000 Minutes with God.

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**Vision: 1,000,000 Minutes with God**

**Invest at least 1% of your day (15 minutes) in focused, face to face time with God.**

If my Math is right, assuming we're off to a strong start, we should be up to about 21,000 minutes!

Why are pursuing this? So Jesus can multiply himself into me. Who would raise your hand and say: "I need Jesus to multiply himself into me!"

- Maybe it's been a LONG time since you've picked up your Bible, and you feel a sense of shame. That doesn't change God's love for you! He wants to enjoy an intimate friendship with you!
- Maybe you are already behind on our reading plan, and you're hesitant to jump in. Listen, don't even worry about "catching up." Just start Luke 11 with us tomorrow.
  - This week, one of our Community Group Leaders told me that 3 people in their Group said: "We haven't started, but we're committing now."
  - I LOVE THAT!!

Let's do this together! I want to ask you to follow our reading plan, even if you go above and beyond. It will enhance our relationships and conversations. It will provide common ground for encouragement, prayer and community as we walk with Jesus together!

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**\*\*\*\*\*NEW SLIDES POINTING TO RESOURCES\*\*\*\*\***

1. **Webpage.**
2. **Plan/Guide**

We're here to help you encounter God daily. If you go to [rhc.church/biblereading](http://rhc.church/biblereading), you will not only find our reading plan (1 chapter/5 days a week) reading through the NT this year, but you will also find a very useful Devotional Guide. Print these out. Use them as you spend that focused, face to face time with God this year!

You can also go to our...

### 3. **App.**

Click the Bible tab at the bottom of the home screen. Then tap the calendar, and the day's reading will magically appear before your eyes.

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I promise you, as you spend sincere, honest time with God each day, you will have an answer when someone asks:

### Two Essential Questions

1. **How is God changing you?**

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T: But that's just one side of Jesus' multiplication equation. Follow me & HELP OTHERS FOLLOW ME. Receive & GIVE. Experience intimacy that drives you to MINISTRY. It's not just...

### The Multiplication Middle

- "Follow me." - Jesus multiplies himself into us.
- "And I will make you fishers of men." - We multiply ourselves into others.

Jesus uses a brilliant and very personal metaphor: "Hey fishermen, I'm going to teach you how to fish for people!" It's a call to ACTION, a call to POUR OUT for the sake of others.

But notice Jesus says: "I WILL MAKE YOU fishers of men."

- Only the transforming work of Jesus in our souls will move us to move toward others.

- Only the transforming work of Jesus in our souls will change us so that we really, really want – it's not too strong to say, WE LIVE to BRING HIS CHANGE TO OTHERS.
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- Fishing for people is the call to make more disciples, but what is disciple-making?

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### DISCIPLE-MAKING. - UMBRELLA SLIDE (Pic attached)

We often fall into one of two errors:

- 1) Some people live as if disciple-making is ONLY introducing people to Jesus and leading them to salvation. That's evangelism.
- 2) Other people live as if disciple-making is ONLY helping people who already follow Jesus grow to follow Jesus in all of life. That's discipleship.

I realize you are probably more comfortable with one of these responsibilities than the other, but Jesus calls us to both!

- People will never follow Jesus unless we share the good news, unless we evangelize. BUT
- People will never follow Jesus in all of life unless we teach them to obey everything Jesus said, unless we disciple them.

Evangelism + Discipleship = Disciple-making

The multiplication middle says...

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**"Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1)**

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As live in the multiplication middle, taking what we RECEIVE from Jesus and GIVING it to the people around us with intentional, strategic investments, we will be able to answer the 2<sup>nd</sup> essential question:

### Two Essential Questions \*\*\*\*(VISION SLIDE)

1. How is God changing you?
  2. How is God changing others through you?
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T: Finally, Jesus says, if you are going to answer my call and live in the multiplication middle, you must...

### **3. Pay the price of discipleship (1:18-20)**

Read 18-20.

### The Authority of Christ

- Jesus' authoritative words demand a response. We will see this all throughout Mark's gospel. Mark Strauss says, "When he speaks, demons are put to flight, diseases are healed, storm waves are calmed, and experts in debate are rendered speechless. Jesus speaks and acts with the authority of God." -
- Do you hear his voice? Will you respond today?

T: Jesus puts forth an urgent call that carries a great cost.

### The COST: Radical Surrender

- We're talking about radical surrender! They left EVERYTHING!

- Simon and Andrew: “And IMMEDIATELY they left their nets and followed him.” (v. 18)
- James and John: “And IMMEDIATELY they left their father Zebedee in the boat...and followed him.” (v. 20)
- They DROPPED THEIR NETS!
- IMMEDIATELY, they stopped fishing for fish to start following Jesus and fishing for people.
  - They left their family behind. They said goodbye to the people they loved the most. Nothing would have been more costly in the first century!
  - They also left their vocational ambitions and financial security on the shore of the sea of Galilee.
  - For some, this is the tougher ask: Jesus, my fam is one thing, but my job, my career, what I’ve worked so hard for ALL THESE YEARS! Really Jesus?!”
- It is a COSTLY CALL! Following Jesus fully means radical surrender.
- “The call to follow Jesus is clear and unconditional! In essence He puts before us a blank contract and says, “Sign at the bottom, and I will fill in the details!” - Akin

There is a cost to follow him. There is a cost to helping others follow Jesus.

DROP THE NETS! Fish have value. People have infinite value.

DROP THE NETS!

**The Point: Answer the costly call to follow Jesus and help others do the same.**

“DROP THE NETS!”

*Conclusion:*

Is God calling you to begin a relationship with him? Do you hear the voice of Jesus tugging at your soul, “Follow me. You’ve been putting me off, but now it’s time to drop the nets and follow me.

Let us know. Connect Card...

Is God calling you to greater ministry? Maybe he’s calling you to DROP THE NETS and serve in a greater way. Maybe he’s calling you...

- To start making intentional discipleship investments to help someone else follow Jesus in all of life.
- To a leadership role in our church.
- Maybe he’s calling you to a vocational shift. We’ve seen this with Dr. Steve Agboola. One of our own pastors dropping the nets on the shores of MGH to enter full time mission and ministry with Jesus.
- We’re seeing this with others in our church answering the call to vocational ministry!
- Don’t say God can’t use me! He chose fishermen. Dudes with no formal training and they got trained by walking with Jesus!

Connect Card - PRAYER SECTION - Prayer: More of me...

The Kingdom is at HAND. Repent and Believe. Follow ME!

**“Has the realization gripped you that the very life of heaven itself dwells within you here and now? Did you ever know that? I am afraid we live most of our life in terms of promise. . . . Our Gospel is a Gospel of glorious promise and hope. Yes, the best, the glorious best, is yet to be. And yet . . . The future has already begun. The Age to Come has reached into This Age; the Kingdom of God has come unto you. The eternal life which belongs to tomorrow is here today. . . ., in part but in reality.**

This is what eternal life means. This is what it means to be saved. It means to go about every day in the present evil Age living the life of heaven. It means that every local fellowship of God's people who have shared this life should live together and worship and serve together as those who enjoy a foretaste of heaven here on earth. This is what the fellowship of a Christian Church ought to be. . . . This is the Gospel of the Kingdom."

- George Eldon Ladd, The Gospel of the Kingdom