

KINGDOM

the gospel of mark

Week 2 | Kingdom: The Gospel of Mark | January 11, 2015

Opening Up:

What are you best at? What have you wanted to be best at, but couldn't be? How do you know when to chase a dream and when to give up on it?

Mark is an action packed book. Jesus moves quickly and decisively in the narrative. Mark shows us a focused and determined Jesus who is determined to embrace his purpose to offer his life in exchange for ours. Mark tells us that we are saved by what Jesus has done (i.e. the good news) and not by anything we have done.

Read: Mark 1:16-23

Discuss:

1. In verses 1-20 Jesus claims supremacy over the disciples' careers and their families. The disciples prioritized "Following Jesus" over their family and work. Do you find it difficult to surrender your work or family for the sake of following Jesus? Explain. What does it look like to surrender your family, work, or ambitions to Jesus?
2. Jesus never says, "moderation in all things" or "moderately follow me." It seems that many people would rather be moderately faithful than to be fanatically faithful. Do you think this is true? Explain.
3. It was argued on Sunday that Christianity is good news. Religion is good advice on how you must live if in order to earn your way to God. Religious fanaticism leads to feelings of superiority, exclusion, hate, and oppression. While Christian fanaticism leads to feelings of humility, inclusion, love, and service. Do you find this to be true? Why or why not?
4. We have defined following Jesus at New City this: A follower of Jesus is someone who is submitting the way to Jesus in every area of life with increasing measure. Where is it most challenging for you to submit the way to Jesus?
5. In Mark 1:20-21 Jesus teaches like he is the author. Tim Keller says the following in the book Kings Cross about reading the Bible after he was converted. Have you ever felt this way?

"The Bible came alive in a way that was hard to describe. The best way I can put it is that, before the change, I poured over the Bible, questioning and analyzing it. But after the change it was as if the Bible, or maybe Someone through the Bible, began pouring over me, questioning and analyzing me."

6. Read 1 Corinthians 2:10-13. How does this verse speak to what the Holy Spirit does when we read the Bible? How does this underscore the importance of Bible reading? Can you tell a difference in your life when are reading the Bible with regularity?
7. In Mark 1:34 Jesus heals many who are sick and cast out many demons. How does the existence of demons help us explain some of the evil that is in the world? In Colossians 2:13-15 we read that Jesus puts the demons to open shame at his victory over death. How does this truth help you face the dark forces of evil in the world?
8. Jesus has authority, ultimate authority over all things. He is the king of all kings. When heaven was "torn open" as his kingdom came into the world, his kingdom came with power over darkness, sickness, and death. In light of Matthew 6:10, how should we be praying and living?