


**The Gospel of Mark**  
**Part 4**  
**Jesus' First Disciples**

# TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Triangle Community Church aims to be a "transforming church". We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to "discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." Since "Talking Points, Walking Points" is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to "dive deep" too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled "Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time", are perfect for private reflection.

## Questions for Reflection or Discussion

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- Read Mark 1:15-20 and review the **Sermon Summary** for what we learned about "time" and "fulfilled".

How does the following information (from Wikipedia) support the idea that "the fullness of time" really means "**Jesus really is Lord, and he changed everything!**"?

**Common Era** (CE) and **Before the Common Era** (BCE) are alternatives to the original **Anno Domini** (AD) and **Before Christ** (BC). The two notation systems (ie, AD/BC and BCE/CE) are numerically equivalent: "2023 CE" = "AD 2023" and "400 BCE" = "400 BC". Since the later 20<sup>th</sup> century, BCE and CE have become popular in academic and scientific publications because BCE and CE are religiously neutral terms. They have been promoted as more sensitive to non-Christians by not referring to Jesus, the central figure of Christianity.

- Pastor Doug noted that repenting and believing are really just one act, from two angles. "From what" do we repent (ie, turn away)? When and how have you done that? Tell us about it.  
"To what" do we exercise faith (ie, turn toward)? When and how have you done that? Tell us about it.
- Read Matthew 10:37-39. How have you "repented" of loving anything or anyone more than Jesus?  
What evidence is there that you have "believed" the truth contained in this passage?
- Pastor Doug noted that "*God still chooses and uses ordinary, rough-around-the-edges people to accomplish his purposes today.*" Are you allowing God to use you? Tell us about it.

# Sermon Summary

Key Text: Mark 1:14-20

Mark's gospel presents an accurate account of Jesus' life. Nonetheless, misconceptions about Jesus multiply. The Jesus many people today want to have a connection to today isn't the Jesus of the Bible, but a projection of our own desires—non-threatening, affirming, applauding—never challenging, convicting, or commanding us! This may be the Jesus we want, but this isn't the real Jesus, or the Jesus that we need. Following the real Jesus involves adversity and suffering. Notice that Mark intentionally correlates the arrest of John the Baptist with the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Mark's original readers were themselves being mercilessly persecuted by the Roman emperor Nero. They would have found Mark's account of Jesus' life greatly encouraging, knowing that their decision to follow Jesus was a sound one, and that others before them had remained faithful in the face of adversity.

Jesus' message was that "the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel" (v. 15). There are two Greek words for time, *chronos* (which refers to the moment- by-moment passing of time) and *kairos* (which refers to a particular moment in time that is so significant that it defines everything coming after it). When Mark said "the *kairos* is fulfilled" he said that the most historic event in all of history was the coming of Jesus. So significant, in fact, world history was defined by that moment: BC (before Christ) and AD (anno Domine, "in the year of our Lord"). Jesus is the dividing line of history. The *kairos* was "fulfilled"—literally "super fullness", like when you overfill your coffee cup.

The time for the arrival of the kingdom of God was "super full" because Jesus the King was on the scene. The long-awaited Messiah had come. This *kairos* moment was unfolding in the person of Jesus —and so people needed to "repent and believe in the gospel." Repenting and believing are really just one act from two angles: repenting is turning from something; believing is embracing something else. We abandon other hopes of salvation and embrace Jesus as Savior. This was an historic moment for the Jewish people; would they embrace Jesus as Messiah? It is a *kairos* moment for us as well. The offer is for everyone, but to receive salvation, you must repent and believe in the gospel.

Then Mark quickly moves to the calling of the first disciples (v. 16-17). This too was shocking because the Sea of Galilee, which really is an inland lake, was one of the most productive bodies of water in the ancient world. It had sixteen bustling ports and several towns named for the fishing trade (Bethsaida, "house of the fisher"; Magdala, "fish tower"; and Taricheae, "salted fish"). Fish from the Sea of Galilee were exported throughout the region. That Galilean fishermen successfully competed in the larger Mediterranean market testifies to their skill, prosperity, and ingenuity. We must not think of the fishermen whom Jesus called to follow him as indigent day-laborers. They were shrewd and successful businessmen. Yet when Jesus called them to "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men," they immediately left their nets (v. 19-20). Mark gives the impression that a strange guy walks up, says, "Hey guys, follow me," and seemingly without hesitation, they do just that! Mark cut to the chase, but John's gospel gives more details. Several months before this they'd heard John the Baptist identify Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:35-49). Mark's account was not their first exposure to Jesus. They had already come to trust Him. But this was their initial call to follow Jesus in discipleship. And it was a radical step to leave their fishing businesses behind in order to follow Jesus.

But there's another unusual aspect of Jesus' ministry: in the ancient Jewish world, rabbis never recruited students. Students demonstrated that they were qualified—but Jesus hand picked his students. They were by no means finished products; they may well have been successful businessmen, but they were very rough around the edges. But Jesus saw in them great potential, and he drew it out. Jesus was a "peripatetic" teacher (literally "given to walking"). As he went from town to town, he lectured and taught his disciples. His disciples later wrote down his teachings so that it could be accurately passed down, through the centuries, to us.

God still chooses and uses ordinary, rough around the edges people to accomplish his purposes today. He is able to see beyond our sin, our selfishness, and our character flaws, to what we can become in the hands of the Master. If you are a follower of Jesus, it is not because you chose him, but because he chose you before the foundation of the world. He also calls you to leave behind everything that hinders you from following him completely and unreservedly (Matthew 10:37-39), to make him our "first love" (Revelation 2:2-5), and to have "sincere and pure devotion to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:3). Are you willing to leave behind all those things which compete for your devotion? Will you follow the lead of Simon and Andrew and James and John, and heed Jesus' call? Jesus says, "Come and follow me."

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

*A disciple is a follower or a learner. A disciple takes up the ways of his teacher—his ways of thinking and of behaving. So, to be a disciple of Jesus means that we must...*

**Monday—** ...be a **worshiper**, as Jesus was. What do you learn from the following verses?

- John 17:4 \_\_\_\_\_
- John 12:27-28 \_\_\_\_\_
- John 4:21-24 \_\_\_\_\_
- Hebrews 13:15-16 \_\_\_\_\_

**Tuesday—** ...be **obedient**, as Jesus was. What do you learn from the following verses?

- Hebrews 5:7-9 \_\_\_\_\_
- John 5:19 \_\_\_\_\_
- Philippians 2:5-8 \_\_\_\_\_
- John 13:13-17 \_\_\_\_\_

**Wednesday—** ...be **holy**, as Jesus was. What do you learn from the following verses?

- John 5:30 \_\_\_\_\_
- John 8:46 \_\_\_\_\_
- Hebrews 7:26-28 \_\_\_\_\_
- Romans 12:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

**Thursday—** ...be a **servant**, as Jesus was. What do you learn from the following verses?

- Mark 10:42-45 \_\_\_\_\_
- Luke 22:24-27 \_\_\_\_\_
- Isaiah 49:3-7 \_\_\_\_\_
- John 20:19-21 \_\_\_\_\_

**Friday—** ...be a **witness**, as Jesus was. What do you learn from the following verses?

- John 3:1-8 \_\_\_\_\_
- John 4:7-26 \_\_\_\_\_
- John 9:1-7 & 35-41 \_\_\_\_\_
- John 4:27-38 \_\_\_\_\_

**Saturday—***In preparation for gathering with your church family tomorrow, read Mark 1:21-28.*