

Marks of Discipleship

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading
Giving Time, Talents & Resources
Spiritual Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the Church

January 24, 2020

Day 1: Mark 1:14-15

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

John the Baptist called the people to repent - to turn around and go a different direction. Jesus adds to John's message - believe in the good news. We need to admit our wrongs and change direction but without belief we cannot start to move in the correct direction. With each step we take in that correct direction we find belief easier and easier. Our faith and belief grows as we use it. Jesus affirms John's ministry by saying the time is fulfilled and points to His ministry by asking for belief.

Question: Jesus going to Galilee was not to escape being arrested by Herod Antipas, like John's was. Why not?

Challenge: What do you think Jesus meant by, "the kingdom of God has come near" ?

Scripture: Mark 6:14-29

Day 2: Mark 1:16

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen.

Simon and Andrew are fishermen from Capernaum, one of the many fishing villages along Lake Galilee. The Bible does not tell us what Jesus saw in these two fishermen to cause him to call them to follow him. The fact that they are people from an ordinary job in a small village emphasizes that God is the one providing the power for the mighty things they will do. The ones Jesus called and the ones Jesus calls today need to be very clear that we can do mighty things but that it is because of God working through us, not our own power.

Question: What do you think caused Jesus to stop and call these two?

Challenge: Think of five skills that you have that Jesus could use if He called you.

Scripture: Jeremiah 1:1-19

Day 3: Mark 1:17

And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.'

The call from Jesus to follow him is a call given to all of us. We are all called to follow him and some of those who are called to follow are further called to enter into a specific ministry. Those not called into a specific ministry are none the less called to declare the good news in their manner of living. When we counsel individuals about types of careers they might pursue we should change young people if we do not emphasize the fact that God is calling them into a career. There are a lot of different jobs in this world and we can do a variety of jobs but God calls each one to a job or career. In that job or career we are to be producers, not just consumers.

Question: Is this a good image for evangelism - fish for people?

Challenge: How would you go about fishing for people?

Scripture: Exodus 1

Day 4: Mark 1:18

And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

Can you imagine going to sign up for classes at a college and having each of the department teachers in a line encouraging you to follow them and not to bother to sign up for class? Not only are you to follow them but you are not told how long it will take to finish your course of study. Jesus is telling both pairs of fishermen to drop what they are doing, give up the living they have and to follow for an unknown period of time. Being a disciple today means being a lifelong follower of Jesus. During our lifetime we will be doing different jobs and activities but still as a follower we will do everything in Jesus' name. Some will spend their life in fulltime ministry but before we are called into fulltime ministry we are first called to serve our Lord Jesus Christ.

Question: What do you think was the response of those around these four as they left to follow Jesus?

Challenge: What would it take for you to go on a short term volunteer mission experience?

Scripture: Matthew 19:16-30

Day 5: Mark 1:19

As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets.

The point of mentioning James and John is to underscore the fact that they are literally called from doing their job (mending nets) to follow Jesus. Again, this emphasizes that when God calls us to believe in the good news we can be anywhere doing anything. God's call to follow comes in God's time, not ours. We often think that it is in a worship service that individuals are called to follow but Jesus calls these while at work.

Question: What do you think Mr. Zebedee had to say?

Challenge: What is the best way for God to get your attention?

Scripture: Genesis 11:26-12:1-9

Day 6: Mark 1:20

Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

Over the years preachers have said how great it was for these men to leave everything and follow Jesus. They had to give up what they had (and do so for an unknown period of time) to follow. What we do not notice is the cost to the family. If these men go off and follow Jesus then how will the family make ends meet? The fishing business required the whole family to work and now a large part of that family goes off to follow this new teacher. The cost of discipleship can be large for some people. When we make a commitment to follow Christ it has an effect on those near to us.

Question: What do you think their wives thought about them going off with Jesus and what was their opinion of Him?

Challenge: Give some examples of decisions you have made that have had either a positive or negative effect on your family.

Scripture: I Corinthians 7