

THE SERVANT SAVIOR'S MISSION

Wednesday, July 12

Reading: Mark 1:14-34

Mark 1:15 *"The time has come," He said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"*

After His temptation in the wilderness, Jesus began His public ministry. In these 21 verses, Mark introduces us to what will be the main focus of Jesus' earthly ministry.

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS (1:14-15). The kernel of the gospel is found in these verses. The full message would be understood after Jesus rose from the dead, but the heart of the message is here. "Repent and believe." These are two sides of the same coin. Repentance and faith are both required for salvation. Jesus' message had such authority that it shocked the people (1:22).

CALLING DISCIPLES (1:16-20). In this famous passage Jesus calls the four fishermen to follow Him. This was a radical call. They were to leave everything to follow Him. The traditional "I will make you fishers of men" captures the idea better than the NIV translation. It is Jesus Himself who will transform them. He would finish the work He had started by calling them to be fishers of men.

CONFRONTING THE ENEMY (1:21-28). This is the first of many encounters Jesus had with Satan and his demonic forces. Again the people are amazed at Jesus' power.

CARING FOR THE NEEDY (1:29-34). A large part of Jesus' ministry involved healing the sick and driving out demons. The gospels often speak of Jesus being "moved with compassion" over the suffering and hurting around Him...and He acted!

These are the very things Jesus has called us to do. (1) We are to be busy sharing the good news of Jesus with those around us. (2) Before He returned to heaven, Jesus' last command was to "make disciples" (Matthew 28:19) – people who are following Christ and growing to be more like Him. (3) We are called to confront the darkness and evil influences of this world with the gospel of Christ. (4) And we are called to reach out with the love of Christ to the needy and neglected.

POINTS TO PONDER:

1. "Be Quiet! Come Out of Him!" It is interesting that in the gospels, it is only the demons who call Jesus "the Holy One of God." While the people debate Jesus' identity, the demons know exactly who He is...and they tremble! They have no power against the Son of God. What does it mean that Jesus is "the Holy One of God." Are you relying on Christ's power to defeat the enemy in your life?
2. "Jesus Healed Many." Jesus met people's spiritual needs by proclaiming the kingdom of God. But He did not ignore their physical needs. Our first goal should always be to show people their spiritual need of the Savior, but we must also reach out in compassion to meet physical needs. Christ's love is shown not only in our words but also in our actions (James 2:14-18). 'People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.'