

# Jesus is the King of the Kingdom



## Mark 1:9-20

We will be in Mark chapter 1. If you want to go ahead and turn there, that's where we'll find ourselves. Before we dive into the actual text, I want you to pretend like it's tomorrow for just a moment. I want you to go through your normal Monday routine. I've got a friend who is reading a book called, The Magic Morning. He's got this whole new routine. He's like a guy who slept in, now he's waking up at 5:30 doing this whole routine. He has a magic morning now. Maybe that's you. You get up super early and you have a magic morning. Maybe it's not you and you wake up at the very last moment to roll out of bed and hit the day. Whatever your Monday looks like, go through that routine and then imagine doing whatever you're going to do tomorrow. Say you're an electrician, and you're in a house, pulling wire, putting conduit together; you're doing your work. If you're a teacher, you're at school, getting your lesson plan ready, the kids are coming in; you're teaching them. You're a nurse, you're a doctor, you're at the hospital, and you're caring for patients. Maybe you build websites so you're coding. Maybe you're answering calls. You're selling something. You're a student. You're in a classroom. Maybe you work at home and you're trying to do things around the house. Whatever it is that you do, imagine tomorrow you're doing that thing. That's who you are. You're a farmer, so you're not really doing anything right now because it's raining all the time. Imagine that you are something and you're doing that thing. Let's just pretend that in the middle of your day you're right in the middle of something, you're doing your work. You're a carpenter you're swinging a

hammer. You're a teacher you're in the middle of a lesson plan. You're a student you're taking notes. Whatever you're doing, some guy walks up and says, follow me; I've got a different plan for your life. Just imagine that really happened. You're actually doing what you do, and a guy walks up and says that to you; just come follow me and I'm going to change your life. The question is would you be crazy to follow this guy. Most of us go through our day tomorrow and we would say yeah, it would probably be a little crazy to follow this guy who's just told me to leave that thing that I do, the place that I've gotten to. This is my life. This is who I am. I'm retired. I'm doing my hobby...follow you to some other life? What we see in Mark chapter 1 is we're going to meet four guys who that actually happens to them. They're fishing because they're fishermen. They're doing what they normally do. They've probably grown up with dad's business, and now they're taking it over. They're fishing. They're doing what they do; they're fishermen. All of a sudden, some guy walks up on the shore and says come follow me and I will make you fishers of men. I'll do something different. I'm going to change your life. It says these guys immediately throw down their nets. They immediately leave their dad in the boat and they go and follow this guy into a new life. The question I want to ask this morning is, are these four guys crazy? Were they crazy to leave everything to follow this guy, or, would they be crazy not to? Really, to answer that question, the only thing we've got to figure out is who this guy is. Who is this guy called Jesus of Nazareth who comes up to the shoreline and beckons these four guys to leave everything to come and follow Him. The only way it makes sense, the only way for it not to be absolutely crazy, is if this guy is worth it, if this guy is worth more than their lives and more than what they're doing. It all matters about who this guy, Jesus, is. Hopefully, some of you have come because you have questions about Jesus. Maybe somebody brought you because you're not really sure who Jesus is. You've heard about Him, but you don't know about Him. You're in a great spot because we're going to go through the gospel of Mark over the next pretty good while. We're going to see who Jesus is, and in this particular section, Mark chapter 1, we're going to see these snapshots of who Jesus is. We're going to get little pictures of who Christ is. Then we're going to see, hopefully, as we end our time, Jesus is the keys of the Kingdom who

demands our response. That response is to follow and fish. What we're going to see is it's not crazy to leave everything and follow Jesus, but it would actually be crazy not to because of who Jesus is. He is the King of the Kingdom who tells us to follow and fish. Let's stand out of reverence for the Word of God as we read this portion of Mark's gospel. We're going to begin reading in verse 9 of chapter 1. Under the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, Mark pens these words, so this is God speaking to us about the testimony of His Son.

## **Scripture**

***"In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."***

***The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.***

***Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."***

***Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him."***

(Prayer)

Father God, I pray that You would help us to see who Jesus is, that Jesus is the King of the Kingdom, and our proper response is to repent and believe in the gospel. We pray this in Jesus good name, amen.

We talked about last week, Mark kind of opened up his gospel that there has been a prophecy from Isaiah. There's a promise in the Old Testament, and Mark says that promise has been kept. Jesus is here. He is the Son of God. He is the Messiah who has come to rescue us. Then we see that John comes out as this prophet, and he starts telling people the Messiah is coming, you guys need to get ready. So everybody comes from the surrounding areas, and they're all getting baptized by John. John is baptizing them for a baptism of repentance, for forgiveness of sin. So they're coming into this baptism saying I'm a sinner. I'm not right with God, but I want to be in a place where when the Messiah comes I'm going to be ready for Him. So they are coming and confessing their sins. They're confessing their shortcomings. All of a sudden, we see Jesus come to the river Jordan, and He goes down into the water and asks John to baptize Him. So we've got a little bit of a problem. If you've been in church for a while, you don't really think...oh yeah, the baptism of Jesus; of course it happened. We know that. But let's just deal with really deal with this tension a little bit. What is the baptism about? It's a baptism of repentance of sin. It's sinners coming and confessing all the wrongs that they've done, and Jesus shows up to get baptized. So what's happening? Is Jesus coming as a sinner to get baptized? Is He coming to confess His sins? Is He coming to confess His shortcomings, all the ways that He's broken the laws of God, all the ways He hasn't loved His neighbor? Is He coming to confess, yes, I, too, am a sinner? We are going to see there is going to be a commentary from Heaven that's going to show us that that's not what's taking place. Jesus is not a sinner; He's the Anointed One. He's the beloved Son. But here we have a little bit of a tension, and we see in the other gospels, when Jesus shows up, John actually protests. He is like no, I can't baptize You; You need to baptize me. Jesus said no, you do this to fulfil all righteousness. We see that Jesus is coming, and who do we know Jesus is

so far in this gospel? We know He's the Son of God is what Mark has already told us. In chapter 1:24, a demon who meets Jesus said I know who You are; You're the Holy One of Israel. So You are the holy ONE in Israel who is holy, and it's You. So here, we have Jesus, the Son of God, the Holy One, who is going into a sinner's baptism. Why is Jesus doing that? I want to say that Jesus was not getting baptized to confess His sins. He wasn't going into the waters to get forgiveness and repentance. Instead, He was going into the waters of baptism to identify with us as sinners. He wasn't going and confessing His sin; He was identifying with sinful humanity, that all these people need forgiveness, and I am going to be the way of forgiveness, that those who come in baptism, if they believe in Me, one day they can walk out of an empty tomb forgiven and free. Jesus, the sinless one, goes into a sinner's baptism to identify with us, broken and sinful humanity. He is marking Himself out as the anointed Savior; these are the people I've come to save, those who know they are broken and need a Savior. So at His baptism, Jesus is identifying with sinful humanity as the Savior. It is an odd place for Him to be. He doesn't belong there. He doesn't belong in the waters of baptism.

That's not the only place we find Jesus at where He doesn't belong. There's another place in the gospel we find Him in a place He doesn't belong, and that's hanging on a cross. The cross, as we look at Jesus hanging there, we should all protest and say He does not belong to be there; He does not belong to be a cursed one on a tree because He has done nothing wrong. But Jesus hangs on a tree for us, in our place, for our sins. So in the baptism and on the cross, Jesus is somewhere He doesn't belong because He's identifying with us, those who are wrong, who by believing in Him can be made right. We see in this text He is getting baptized, and here is some commentary. It says, "And when He came up out of the water, immediately He saw the heavens being torn open." So when Jesus comes out of the water, He looks up and the heavens are being torn open. The Greek word is *schizo*. It's an interesting word, so I looked it up to find out how many times Mark uses this word, *schizo*, in this gospel because 'torn apart' seems like pretty strange language. When I looked in Mark's gospel, he only uses the word one other time. He talks about it here that the heavens are torn open, and there's only one other

time that word, schizo, that word, torn, is used, and it's in Mark chapter 15 where it says Jesus said, "It is finished," on the cross; it says, "the curtain was torn, *schizo*, from top to bottom." What is that? It's commentary from God on here is what's taking place on the cross. Jesus is dying a sinner's death, but He's not a sinner. He's dying to make a way for all sinners to come back into My presence, that the way that was blocked by the curtain is now ripped wide open through the body of Jesus Christ. The same thing is happening at the baptism; it's commentary. God is opening the heavens to say I want you to know what's going on. Jesus is not confessing His sins; He's identifying with sinful humanity because He came to save them.

So what happens with this commentary? What does God say? What happens during this tearing of the heavens? Here's what goes on; it says, "The heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on Him like a dove." We have the Spirit of God descending on the Son. What does this mean? I think if we know some Old Testament, some thoughts are brought to mind of, I think I remember there's supposed to be an Anointed One, a Spirit filled One. Isaiah 42:1 says, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations." So this prophecy of Isaiah; there's going to be one who's going to please God, He's going to be anointed by the Spirit of God, and at the baptism, we have the Spirit coming on Jesus, and we have God saying "this is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." What Mark is trying to show at the baptism is this is the Spirit filled Messiah. He is the Savior. He is the one who's come to save us from our sins. He's here, his baptism, He's not a sinner repenting; He's identifying with sinners because He's come to save them. He's the Spirit filled Messiah.

Not only is He the Spirit filled Messiah, He's also the beloved Son. I love what God says about Jesus at His baptism, verse 11, "And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." At the baptism, all of these people are coming; they're all confessing we haven't been pleasing to God. We've broken His Law. We haven't loved God. We haven't loved neighbor. We're all messed up, all jacked up, and all getting baptized because we're not pleasing to God. Yet, there is one who

walks into the Jordan, who God splits the heavens and says look at Him! In Him, I'm happy, I'm pleased, He has kept My Law, He has kept My Word; My soul delights in Him. I am proud of Him; that's My boy! It's this declaration of Jesus as the beloved Son of God. This is a big deal.

I'm a father; I've got four kids, so I know how big of a deal it is for kids to get the approval of their father, their parents. My little three-year-old, Evie Kate, is all the time drawing little pictures. When she draws a picture, she will bring it to me and say, "Daddy, Daddy, look! I drew this for you; is it pretty?" Of course, I'm like, "Oh, honey, that is the most beautiful picture I've ever seen in the whole world; this is amazing!" "Do you like it?" "Oh, I love it." "Do you love me?" "Yes, Evie, I love you so much." Why would Evie paint a picture, or draw some doodles and then bring it to me to say, daddy, are you proud of me? Because in her little heart, she's asking the question, am I loved by my dad? Is he happy with me? Do I measure up? Do I matter? So she comes to me, daddy, daddy, do I have your approval? Am I loved by you? Do you notice me? Do I matter? I get to shout over her how much I delight in her and love her.

We have these little questions when we're little. We want our parent's approval. We want to know we matter and we're valuable and we mean something and we measure up. As kids, we grow up and stop asking that question, but we never stop wondering what the answer is. As little kids, we grow up, and then we grow into adults and we're still asking that question, am I good enough? Do I matter? Am I valuable? Does anybody care? Am I loved? Does anybody notice? Did I do good? Are you proud of me? We have these questions that we want answers to, and it leads us to all sorts of things that we do, both good and bad. Some of us will chase a career to get somebody to sing over us, "Well done, you made it." We'll give our lives to a certain aspiration or thing. We'll try to reach it so somebody will say, "You did it. Congratulations! You matter!" Some of us will get into ungodly relationships because we just want somebody to say, "I love you. I see you. I notice you. I'm proud of you. I'm pleased with you. My heart delights in you." So we go through all these different ways to get these declarations set over us, "You matter. You're valuable. I'm proud of you." But I think deep in our heart, we're really asking the

question, does God love me? Does my Heavenly Father think I'm valuable? Is He pleased with me? Is He proud of me? Deep down, we know we have done everything to get the exact opposite answer. We've rebelled. We've sinned. We've spit in His face. So we think we're broken. We can't be loved by God. We can't be valuable because we know all the things that we've done, all the ways that we've gone wrong. We see at the baptism God peels the heavens and says here's the one that I delight in. Here's the one that I love. Here's the one that I'm proud of, and here's the good news of the gospel. None of the other people in the baptism waters is pleasing to God. They actually lived a life displeasing to God. Here's the good news; if you repent and believe in Christ, God says you're actually put in Christ. Your identity is one who is found in Jesus. Jesus' obedience is your obedience. His righteousness is your righteousness. So if you believe in the gospel, what God sings over Jesus, He also sings over you. He says you are My beloved son; in you, I am well pleased. You're thinking...how can that be? You don't know what I've done! It's because of the cross and empty tomb of Christ that all that you've done has been taken care of.

On the other side, you've been given the righteousness of Christ. What's true about Jesus is true about you. If you're a believer in this room, if you came to Christ through repentance and faith, here's what God says about you. I love you. I'm proud of you. You've done it. You've obeyed. You have My blessings. You have My heart. I am proud of you. Do you know what that means? You don't have to try tomorrow to earn God's love; you already have it in Christ. He has already shouted it over you, so you can live as one that is loved, but one that's trying to earn love. It will change your whole life if you will grasp this concept that God doesn't love me on how good I do; He loves me in Jesus. Jesus has already done good, and He gives His goodness to me, so I'm a beloved Son. That's good news because I'm standing here on stage knowing I've done all sorts of things that don't deserve God's love. But in Christ, I'm loved by God. It doesn't get any better than that; God says He loves me in Jesus! He tore the heavens back to shout that on Jesus. This morning, if you're in Christ, He shouts the same thing over you. You don't have to earn His love; you have His love because His love was given to you in Christ, and in Christ, you are



an obedient son and He is proud of you. Now, you can go live in that love, not earning that love.

Notice what happens after the baptism. He immediately goes into a period of temptation and testing. It says this in verses 12-13, "The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him." Immediately, the Spirit rushes Him out, pulls Him out, forces Him out into this forty-day period of tempting and testing by Satan. If you look at that length of days, forty, is a pretty significant number. When you think about the Bible, you have forty years is when Israel was in the wilderness. Forty days is when Moses went up on the mountain. Forty is a period of testing, so Jesus is being brought into the wilderness, and it can be translated, desert, with wild animals, and Satan, and angels ministering. This is a spiritual warzone. Jesus is going into a battle. He's going to wage war on sin and Satan. What Jesus does that is unique is that He actually wins the battle. We are going to see Jesus as the sinless Savior goes into the battle that we all lost to win that battle that He gives us as a gift. That's what Jesus does in the temptation. Think about it. You have Adam, who, in a perfect garden, surrounded with all the food in the world, flowing water, and a beautiful wife; he's got every single thing he could ever want in a perfect place, and he sins against God when tempted. But here you have Jesus in a not so perfect place, in a desert, where the animals aren't friendly the animals are wild, growling, and biting; in that sort of a place, not in a garden, but in a desert, Jesus Christ enters into the battle with the deck stacked against Him, and He does what Adam couldn't do. He obeys the Lord. For forty years, Israel goes into the wilderness. They're tempted, they're tried, and they failed. They lose the battle over and over again, though they have the presence of God and the Word of God, and they can't obey God. You and I, in our temptation, trials, and testing, more times than not, we fail. We don't obey; we disobey. We constantly lose the victory. We constantly give in and disobey God's Word rather than obey it. But here, Jesus enters into our battle, and He doesn't fall like we did. He is victorious. He always says no to sin, and He always says yes to God. So here, we have Jesus, the Anointed Messiah, the

beloved Son of God, who goes into our battle and comes out the other side, purchasing our victory, something that we couldn't do for ourselves.

Now, He comes out on the scene as the beloved Son, identifying with sinners, but not sharing in their sin, defeating their sin so that He can give them new life. He shows up on the scene and He starts preaching. He starts proclaiming His message. Here's what He says in verses 14-15, "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." Jesus comes and starts proclaiming the gospel of God, the good news. That's a word we throw around a lot, gospel. What in the world does gospel mean? What is the good news of God? Jesus is going to spell it out for us. Here is the good news of God. Part one; He says...the time is fulfilled. What does that mean? He's saying all of that that's happened in the Old Testament from when Adam fell in the garden, there was a promise that a Messiah was going to come and reverse the curse. A Messiah was going to fix all that was wrong. Isaiah 53 says He would die in our place for our sins. Jesus shows up and says the time is fulfilled. It's completed. In other words, the reason I'm here is to say all the Old Testament prophecies all find their yes in Me. All the promises that were made have been kept today. I am the Messiah who came to save. The time is fulfilled.

Now notice it says the Kingdom of God is at hand. Because the time is fulfilled and Jesus is standing there, it means that also the Kingdom of God has come near. It is at hand. What does He mean by the Kingdom of God? If you look up that term, it's a term that Jesus uses a lot; the apostles used it a lot. The Kingdom of God, I will try to loosely define it. I think what the Kingdom of God is talking about is the rule and reign of God in the hearts of men. Living in the Kingdom of God is having Jesus rule and reign over your heart and your life. You bring yourself under His good Word, under His authority. Just like Adam and Eve were made to live in the beginning, but didn't; you now can come back under the rule and reign of God for your life, and you can live according to His Word and experience His blessing. That's the Kingdom of God. The kingdom of this world is here, but now, the Kingdom of God is invading it. There's light that's coming into

darkness. Some of you are saying it doesn't really feel like the Kingdom is here. Just think about the weeks that we've had. Think of the news that has come to us, the headlines we've read, the things that are going on with governors, senators, and all these different things. Imagine that in a progressive place where it seems like things should be getting better, but it seems like they're only getting worse. How could that be if the Kingdom of God is here, if the Kingdom of God has come? What it means when it says Jesus says the Kingdom of God is at hand is He is saying it's here, but it's not here in its completion. It's what theologians call the 'already, not yet.' When Jesus came, the King is here, the Kingdom is here, it's already here right now, but it's not yet come in its completion. In other words, the King is going to return and everything is going to be made right. All sin is going to be dealt with, all righteous is going to flow like the rivers; it will be made right, but at this point, the King is here and the Kingdom is here, and God is inviting people to turn from the kingdom of darkness to be brought in the Kingdom of light so they can live under the rule and reign of Christ. They can have a different way to live in the midst of all that is going on in this world. They can say no, Jesus is my Lord and I'm going to live according to Him. The Kingdom of God is at hand, so when Jesus says that, it can only mean one thing...that the King is here. If the Kingdom is here, then the King has to be here. If the time is fulfilled, then the promise has to be here. So how can Jesus say the promise, the King, and the Kingdom are here? It is because He is the promise, He is the King; He is the King of the Kingdom. When Jesus came, He brought to us the kingdom of God, and He invited us into the Kingdom of God, a new way to live, a new life to pursue.

So what do we do in response to that? The Kingdom of God is at hand; here's the response. Repent and believe in the gospel. Because the King is here, because the Kingdom is here, because the promise is here, the Messiah has come, He has come to do away with our sins, save us, and bring us back to God. Because of that news, what should you and I do? Our response is to repent and believe, to repent and have faith in the gospel, in the good news. We're just beginning to see the good news. The King is here, the Kingdom is here, but in Mark's gospel, he's trying to go as fast as he can to the cross because he wants us to make sure that the King

that we follow is the King who also suffered for us. The King is the one who also went to a cross for His rebellious subjects. He died in our place for our sins. The King died for those rebellious so that through His resurrection, the full good news can be preached, that Jesus the King is here, and there's a problem between you and Him. You've sinned, and He is the Holy One. You can't come into His Kingdom with your sin, but here's the gospel. The King also died in your place for you. The King bore the curse that you deserve so that when you trust in Him, when you believe in Him and repent of your sins, then you can be forgiven. In His death and resurrection, you can be forgiven, set free, and brought into His Kingdom.

Think about those two things...repent and believe. That's what Jesus is calling us to do. It is really like two sides of the same coin. That's how we become believers. It is you repent and believe; it's one thing that you do, but it is two parts. To repent means to turn from something. So if you want Jesus, you have to turn from something. Most of us think that is our sin, and that is true. You have to repent of being a sinner. You have to repent of your sins, but I think it's even deeper than that. You have to turn from yourself. You have to turn from you because here's the reality...we love being the king. We love being in control. From little, little toddlers, we believe the whole world is ours and everything revolves around us. We demand and then we're told as we're growing up that the world is not about you, but we really don't believe that. We just learn to manipulate and we learn how to masquerade all of our thoughts and feelings, but really, the world is still all about us. My life, my dreams, my pleasures, my comforts, what I want; that is how we live our lives. We are the king. We love to sit in the king's chair. It feels good. I mean, the throne of our hearts feels good. I'm in charge, I do what I want, nobody tells me what to do; I call the shots. Then we meet Jesus, and He says you're not the king of your life; I'm actually King of the whole universe, and that includes you. You're not lord, you're not boss; I am Lord, I am King. So in light of that information in seeing who Jesus is, the Anointed One, God, the Son of God, the beloved Son, the one who fought your battle and came out the other side with your victory, in light of who He is, you realize I'm not the king, I'm not in control, so you repent. You turn from yourself. No longer my Lord, no longer am I going to call the shots. I'm going to turn from myself,

and then you turn by faith, by belief in Jesus. That's what repentance is. It's turning from you and turning to Jesus, Jesus, your King, Jesus, your Lord; you're in control now. I'm following You, I'm believing in Your death and Your resurrection. Take my sin and erase it. Give me Your righteousness so I can now follow You in the life that You have for me, not the life that I've created for myself. That's what it means to come into the Kingdom. That's what it means to believe in the gospel. You turn from you, and turn to Jesus.

We see it actually play out. Ok, show us how that works. What does that look like? Jesus goes right into this story. He says this in verses 16-20, "Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed Him. And going on a little farther, He saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed Him." Their reaction to Jesus makes us ask the question, are these guys crazy to leave who they are to follow some guy who says hey, I've got a better life for you? I mean, they weren't just fishing; they were fishermen. This is what they did. This was their identity, this was their career, their retirement, their family, their hopes, their dreams; this was who they were. Jesus says leave it; come and follow Me. I've got a new life plan for you, and it's for you to become something different, for you to become not just fishermen, but become fishers of men, and it says immediately, they just cast down their nets. Two of the brothers leave their dad in the boat! Can you imagine that? Your dad has raised you as fishermen, taught you everything you know, and then some guy says come and follow me...uh, see you, Dad! You just out and you swim to shore and Dad's like, hold on; what about these nets? You got it...I'm going with Him. It just leaves Dad all by himself in the boat with a hired servant. You've got to think now the business is going to go to the hired servant. I'm the son who's not getting the business anymore; it's going to this hired servant. What kind of a sacrifice would that have been for these guys? Are they crazy to follow Jesus, or would they be crazy not to? That's really the

question. Are these guys nuts? Are they crazy, or would they be crazy not to? In light of who Jesus is, the King of the Kingdom, the Spirit-filled Messiah, the sinless Savior, the beloved Son, God in flesh, I think we can all hopefully agree they would be crazy not to. The craziest thing would be not to go after Jesus to follow and become fishers of men.

I just ask...what about you? I know we've kind of preached it, we've told the story and we've heard it, but what about us, right here, right now? What's your response to the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you seen Him as King? Have you seen Him as Lord in such a way that you have repented and believed in Christ? Just think about your life. Am I still king? Do I still call the shots? At the end of the day, if I disagree with Jesus, or I disagree with something that I don't like the Bible says, do I go with me, or do I go with Christ? That tells you who's Lord. That tells you if you are on the throne enjoying your life, or are you really coming to Jesus as King of a new Kingdom? What about you, have you truly repented of self and put your trust in Christ? Are you following after Jesus? That's the first question I want you to wrestle with. Is Jesus really my King? I mean, He's the King of the Kingdom, and the Kingdom is coming in its fullness, and if you're not with the King, you're not going to be in the Kingdom. You're going to be in outer darkness away from the presence of the Lord forever. He's bringing the Kingdom in its completion, and right now, He is inviting us to be part of it. We get in it through His death, burial, and resurrection. We trust that He died for us and rose for us, and we get brought into the Kingdom of Christ. Is Jesus your King? Is He really the one you worship and follow? Is He really the treasure of your whole life, or are you still sitting on the throne because at the end of the day it feels good? You want to be in control. You want to call the shots. You're not submitting to someone else because you are in control. Is Jesus the King?

Secondly, just thinking through that if Jesus is the King, then are you really following after Him? Jesus doesn't just say believe in Me and go do what you want. He says come and follow Me. Follow after Me. Walk with Me. He's inviting them into discipleship relationship. He's inviting them to come and be part of Him. It is interesting in that time when a rabbi called a disciple. This was kind of normal in that culture, but it's reversed how

Jesus does it. In studying, I was reading several different commentaries and they would explain how students would always approach rabbis. A student who thought they had what they had to make it work would approach and ask to be a disciple. Then the rabbi would either agree or not agree. If he agreed, then this certain rabbi would show him, or the disciple that's coming on would show this person here's the type of law we're going to follow. Here's the style of teaching we're going to do. The rabbi would always lead the student to the Law of God, to the ways of God, to the style that they taught. If you're a student, you go after a rabbi who's showing you the Law. They're calling you to the Law, never to themselves. Jesus does the exact opposite. He goes after these people who weren't looking for a rabbi, He goes to them as their rabbi and says come and follow, not the Law, not the Bible, not teaching, not even God; He says come and follow Me. That's totally different than what happened in the first century. Jesus isn't calling these guys to follow some rules. He's calling them to follow Him. He's the King of the Kingdom. He is the Messiah. What do these guys do? They give up their nets and go and follow. The question is have you done that? Are you truly following after Jesus, not just His teachings, not just coming to church, trying to be good? Are you following the person of Jesus Christ? Are you in a relationship with Christ? Is He your treasure? Is He the highest desire of your heart where you live in a worship relationship with Christ and following after Him?

Notice what happens when we follow Jesus. It's like a thing that comes with it. He says follow Me, and, when you follow Me, here's what's going to happen. You're going to be a fisher of men. When you follow Me, you're going to fish. That's part of the deal. When Christ invites us to be a follower, He also sends us on mission to go and fish for other people. He invites us not just to follow Him, but also He invites us to be a part of His mission. His mission is reaching out, and through promoting the gospel and proclaiming the gospel, we're looking for ways to be light. If we're living in the Kingdom following Jesus, we should be living in a way that's causing some ripples around the people that we're associating with. There should be some questions being raised about our lifestyle because we're promoting the gospel. We're loving God with all of our heart. We're loving our neighbors with all of ourselves. That's just a different way to live, so

we're promoting the gospel through our lives and through our light. But in doing that, we should also be proclaiming the gospel, actually speaking about our King, about the goodness of Jesus. Here were guys that constantly threw out nets and hoped to catch fish, and Jesus is saying I'm calling you to follow Me, and you're going to be doing the same thing. You're going to be constantly casting out your net with your life, your influence, and your words. You're going to see if you can catch any fish, if there are some other people around you who are broken, who know they're broken, and know they need a Savior. You can be the one who introduces them to the Savior. So following Jesus includes fishing for Jesus. I just ask; are you doing that? Are you following the Lord, and also looking for ways for the people you're around to influence them for the sake of the gospel, promoting the gospel, and speaking the gospel? That's what our King invites us to do, not to just get Heaven, but to get a Kingdom that's happening right now. We get to live a different life under His authority, under His reign, and in doing so we get to show other people the goodness of our King so that He can also invade their lives. What about you? Do you really believe Jesus is King? Have you really repented, believe in Him, and had that salvation moment where you're no longer king but Jesus is? If that's happened, are you now living a life of following and fishing? I know those are big questions. Those are big application thoughts to process and think through. What we've tried to answer is, are these guys crazy to follow after Jesus Christ? He just walked up to them, come follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. Are these guys crazy, or would it be crazy to do anything else? I just ask us...what about us? Are we also joining with the crazy ones, because it looks crazy to leave everything and follow after Jesus? Sometimes, crazy is actually the smartest thing to do because if Jesus is who He said He is, if He is the King of the Kingdom, it's not crazy to leave everything and follow Him. It is actually the smartest thing to do because we get a Kingdom, we get a new life, and we get invited into His mission and His gospel.

I don't know what the Lord is doing in your heart, but here's what I hope. I hope He has convinced you that Jesus is the King of the Kingdom. I hope you've been convinced of that...ok, I see it; I see it from the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit has impressed on my heart that Jesus is the King of the



Kingdom, and if that's true, then you have a response to make. Either you reject Him, or you repent and believe in Him, you believe in the gospel. Has that happened? Have you repented and believed in the gospel?