

CORE STUDY #2

THE BEGINNING OF JESUS' MINISTRY

PASSAGE: Mark 1:1-28

LEADER PREPARATION

Read the passage over at least three times, noting what you feel might be the main points of the passage. Using your **Summit Training Guide** (section 2 "Engaging the Word" and section 3 "Responding to the Word"), ask observation and interpretation questions of the passage.

You will also find it very helpful to read the parallel passages in the other 3 gospels. By reading all three gospels you will have a fuller picture of what happened and what was said.

- for Mk. 1:2-11 read Mt. 3:1-17; Lk. 3:2-22
- for Mk. 1:12,13 read Mt. 4:1-11; Lk. 4:1-3
- for Mk. 1:16-20 read Mt. 4:18-22; Lk. 5:2-11; Jn. 1:35-42
- for Mk. 1:21-28 read Lk. 31-37

FOUNDATIONS STUDY

- Obtaining a basic understanding.
- Includes questions that address the foundational elements of the passage.
- Do not be shy of rewording these questions for your particular CORE or choosing the questions that you feel are more appropriate for your CORE members.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (selection to choose from)

1. In the first century, Christians were persecuted during the reign of Emperor Nero by being fed to wild animals in the coliseum. How do you think verse 13 could have encouraged these early martyrs when they knew this might be the cost of their identifying with Jesus?
2. Jesus began his public ministry with the words, "The time has come. The Kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news! (Mark 1:15)" What does this mean to you? What does 'the time has come' mean? What is the Kingdom of God?

The Kingdom of God is referred to as the 'kingdom of heaven' in Matthew. The idea of God's kingdom is central to Jesus' teaching. It meant the time of God, the 'day of the Lord' both a future time and a time when the world would end. It is a day of judgment on Israel. God would judge the sin of His people. A day of righteousness, but also a day of celebration. The oppressed could rejoice in freedom from the oppression. God would rule and His will alone would be done on earth, and all injustice/evil/wrongs would stop. The world would come to an end and God would bring a new era.

3. What does it mean to repent and believe the good news? How can repentance be good news?
4. Why did Jesus command the evil spirit in verse 24 to be quiet when it had spoken truth about who Jesus was?

This verse is an example of the 'Messianic secret.'

RESPONSE QUESTION

Jesus preached, "The time has come. The Kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" How do these words of Jesus affect how you live now, as a student at UBC?

GOING DEEPER STUDY

- For those who want to dig below the surface. You can use this in CORE, or pass it to your CORE members to read through the week before the study.
- Includes questions that go into more depth. More background information is provided for each question to help you facilitate the discussion at a deeper level.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (selection to choose from)

1. Why does Mark write that this is the BEGINNING of the gospel rather than simply the gospel or the good news about Jesus Christ?

The life, death and resurrection of Jesus are the "beginning" while the apostolic preaching in Acts is the continuation of the gospel message. Like John, Mark begins his gospel following the first line of the book of Genesis, 'In the Beginning.' Jesus' coming brings a new beginning to the world.

2. What does the phrase 'Son of God' mean?

Jesus is no ordinary man. He is the unique son of God.

3. Verses 2 and 3 are a quote from Isaiah. Why did Mark use it here?

Mark links what was foretold in the Old Testament to what is now fulfilled by Jesus' coming, and later by his teaching and his miracles. What Isaiah said about God applies to Jesus.

4. Where is the Kingdom of God?

It is not a geographical place. It is a time. A time when God rules. But how can God's rule be now? We still experience sin, sickness. The evil still prosper, Satan still roams this world. The KOG is both present (now) and future. The KOG was present in Jesus Christ (Luke 16:16; 11:20) and the KOG will come in its fullness at a future day (2nd coming of Jesus). The fact that demons were cast out by Jesus proved that God had come and was binding the devil.

The present Age:

characterized by
-Satan's rule
-evil people prosper, good suffer
-sickness, disease

The Age to come:

characterized by
-God's rule
-healing of sicknesses
-brought in by God's Messiah