

MARK MY WORDS Lesson 2 – My Call to Meaningfulness Mark 1:16-20 (2:14; John 1:35-43)

9.30.07

INTRO

Last week we began our series “Mark My Words” with Mark 1:15: *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”*

The message was entitled “Maximizing the God Moments.” And in a “nutshell” we took the 4 thoughts of verse 15 and turned them into four “action items.”:

#1. The time is NOW to identify that God is trying to get my attention.

IDENTIFY THE GOD MOMENT

#2. I must acknowledge His presence and know there is “kingdom work” for me to do.

ACKNOWLEDGE GOD’S PRESENCE AND LORDSHIP

#3. There is something I need to repent of, or alter in my attitude or action.

ADJUST MY COURSE TO HIS COURSE

#4. There is something I need to believe and some action I must take

DO WHAT HE CALLS ME TO DO

TODAY we look at Jesus’ call to the fishermen – soon to be disciples: *“follow me and I will make you become fishers of men”*

Today’s message is entitled: *“My Call to Meaningfulness” for I believe that when I accept this call of Jesus to be the call for MY life, I discover my Christian “job description” and the source of meaningfulness in my life - namely to point people to Jesus.*

Like last week we’re going to take the three main sections of this word of Jesus worth “marking” and turn them into 3 action items: 1. FOLLOW 2. FACILITATE 3. FISH

Let’s look at the primary text of our study, Mark 1: 16-20.

1:16 *And as He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen.*

1:17 *And Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.*

1:18 *And they immediately left the nets and followed Him.*

1:19 *And going on a little farther, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who were also in the boat mending the nets.*

1:20 *And immediately He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away to follow Him.*

This account is also recorded in Matthew 4:19.

And we find a similar call to Matthew, the tax collector – soon to be disciple, is made in Mark 2:14: “Follow me.”

Let's first look at this account in its context of Jesus calling His disciples to His purpose.

It might strike us as odd that Peter, Andrew, James and John would so quickly leave their nets and follow Jesus. But as we examine all the gospels, we find that the account given here in Mark and also in Matthew is really the SECOND call to follow that Jesus gives.

Let's look at the FIRST, recorded in John 1, beginning in verse 35. **READ** through verse 43.

So, these four men were first disciples of John the Baptist and discovered Jesus in the Perea wilderness, finding Him to be the long-awaited Messiah. (John 1)

John's gospel goes on to recount how these few disciples accompanied Jesus to the wedding in Cana where the water was turned to wine. Then they saw him overthrow the money changers in the temple. Then they saw Him perform many signs at the Passover feast. (John 2)

Then they heard of how he shared with the Pharisee Nicodemus about being "born again" and becoming a recipient of eternal life through believing and receiving the Son of God. (John 3)

Then as Jesus left Judea to head for his new ministry in Capernaum of Galilee, they walked with Him through Samaria and saw him reach out to the woman at the well, ultimately leading her and much of her town to receive the "living water" He had to offer. Then in Cana again, they saw Him heal the nobleman's son from a distance with just the power of His word. (John 4)

ALL THIS HAPPENED BEFORE THE RECORDED "Follow me" of Mark 1:15.

So, they had been prepared for nearly a year for this ultimate call to discipleship.

THEY WOULD LEAVE THEIR FULL-TIME FISHING JOBS AND BECOME "FISHERS OF MEN" – or those who pointed people to Jesus. This was their "call to meaningfulness" and their Christian "job description" for life.

We ought to note as well, that there was a THIRD CALL TO FOLLOW given to these men. Even after this call recorded in Mark they apparently returned to their fishing, at least on occasion. In Luke 5: 1-11 we read the unique THIRD encounter with Jesus calling them. **RECOUNT**

SO – in context, we see these verses in Mark as the first call and response of the disciples to their mission – the first step to their turning the world "upside down" for the cause of Christ. As they followed Jesus, He equipped and enabled them to become those who would point people to God in Jesus' name and power.

NOW – it is my contention in the study of Mark – that the words of Jesus have great power for us today as well – even taken out of context and applied to us today, as if Jesus was speaking to us.

Hear Him say to YOU, today: *“follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”*

#1 We must **FOLLOW** HIM so that we might fulfill our call to meaningfulness

#2 We must **FACILITATE** His making us to become those fishermen He wants us to be. AND

#3 We must **FISH** in order to be fishermen of men and women

“Action item” #1: FOLLOW implies both a CHOICE and a CALLING

On the one hand, we must CHOOSE to follow Jesus – especially in His task of fishing for me. After all, Jesus calls with a command: “follow me” – giving us a choice.

On the other hand, Jesus teaches in John 10:27 that *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”* In other words, those who have given their life to Jesus WILL follow Him naturally. Our choice is to make Him our Lord – when we have, we WILL follow.

FOLLOW also implies a want to pursue the Lord and imitate the Lord’s personality and methods. It is a lifelong pursuit to be LIKE HIM – and when we are, we will naturally love people as He does and point them to the Father.

So, to FOLLOW is CHOICE to receive and pursue Jesus and a CALLING to be like Him.

It is to recognize that we are typically engaged in pursuits that are less than meaningful and that true meaning comes from being a PEOPLE LOVER and PEOPLE POINTER.

THAT is our call to FOLLOW.

Will you become more of what He wants you to be??? – a lover of people and a pointer of people to the Father???

THAT LEADS US TO “ACTION ITEM” #2. Mark 1:15 says “Follow me and I will make you to become fishers of men.” Therefore, we must **FACILITATE** His making us to become that fisherman He wants us to be. He will do the making and becoming, but we must yield and give Him permission, as in all areas of Christian maturity.

Do you WANT to become more of a lover of people? Do you WANT to allow God to make you into more of a FISHER OF MEN?

Proverbs 11:30 says “He who wins souls is wise.”

Daniel 12:3 says “They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever.”

Jesus said in Matthew 9:37, 38 *The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.*

This speaks of our willingness to both PRAY for workers and more, to BE that worker that is needed. Are you willing to pray that God will send YOU into his field?

The devil would try to convince you that you've already said and done all that you can and that your friends really aren't ready to receive and that you might not be the instrument of God's pointing them.

Remember Jesus' words in John 4:35 and 36 *Behold I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. Already he who reaps is receiving wages, and is gathering fruit for life eternal, that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.*

Whether you sow seeds of spiritual interest or whether you reap a soul into the kingdom, God is pleased with your "fishing" AND many people are ready to receive, and God wants to use YOU.

So, FACILITATE God's "making you to become" = be yielding, be willing, be ready

The THIRD and FINAL "action item" is to FISH

He will make us fishers of men, but we must FISH – in his strength and leading

If this is our Christian occupation and calling, if this is what brings greatest meaning in life, if this is indeed the "great commandment" – to "go into all the world"

And if God has called and equipped us – we are foolish NOT to fish, believing that God will use us.

Just as fishers of fish strategize about the best time to catch, the best place to catch and what bait to use - we as fishers of men must likewise be constantly thinking about going where the fish are and "putting out the bait" – or to use another metaphor – to "sow the seed"

God will use YOUR personality – don't try to be what you are not. BUT BE WHAT YOU ARE!

If I had to break down our strategy into 2 simple points and words, they would be:

LOVE and POINT

PEOPLE NEED LOVE and are STARVED for sincere, Christian (agape) love. Give them what they need and want.

PEOPLE NEED POINTER. Satan has confused people to where they don't know where to turn and have "given up" trying.

Remember what Paul taught in 2 Corinthians 6: 18-20 *Now all things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. ("POINTING") Namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. (POINTING) Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

FOLLOW FACILITATE FISH

Are you willing to take these steps to discover YOUR call to meaningfulness???