

## Jesus calls the disciples

Mark 1:1–3:35  
Key Verses 3:13,14

“Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach...”

Peter! Andrew! John! James! Matthäus! At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus called the disciples. Jesus' calling was not just to call a name. In his calling, we can learn his broken heart for the suffering sinners, his hope to raise them into shepherds and spiritual leaders, and his vision to reach to all nations through them. In the first three chapters in Mark's gospel, we can find Jesus, the Son of God who has authority to teach, to heal, and to drive out demons. However, that was not the only reason that people followed him. The leadership of Jesus is deeply rooted in his broken heart for sinners and God's hope for the hopeless. May God bless this time to learn Jesus' leadership, so that each of us may grow to become Global Spiritual Leaders who have Jesus' broken heart and the hope of God for the hopeless.

### The beginning of the Good News (1:1-13)

From the beginning of his gospel, Mark tells what the good news is about and how it had begun. Look at 1:1. “The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God.” The good news is about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. Is it good news that the Son of God came to save all sinners and even give his life as the ransom for many? (Mk10:45) Is it good news that by believing in his name, we have the right to become children of God? (Jn1:12) How did this good news begin? Jesus' coming was announced and prepared through John the Baptist just as Isaiah had prophesied 700 years before John' birth. Preaching the baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, John led people to repentance and

prepared their hearts to receive the Lord who would truly forgive their sins with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This gospel of Jesus is not a man-made story, but the fulfillment of God's promises throughout the history. It teaches us that Our God is the God of History; God is faithful and powerful enough to keep what he had promised. According to God's promises, the gospel of Jesus began with John the Baptist.

Look at verses 9-13. Receiving the baptism of water from John, Jesus humbly began the gospel work in God's way. God was then so pleased with him that he poured out the Spirit upon him and confirmed his love for him, saying “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” Though he was sent out into the wilderness by the Spirit and tempted by Satan, Jesus overcame the temptation by the living word of God. Being filled with the Spirit and the love of God, Jesus began the Messianic ministry with the victory against Satan. Then, what did Jesus first do as he began the ministry?

### 2. The beginning of Jesus' ministry (1:14-3:12)

First, Jesus preached the good news of the Kingdom of God. Look at verse 14-15. “After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” In the time of darkness Jesus did not withdraw nor compromise, but proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom of God. During his whole messianic ministry, he never stopped preaching

the message of the kingdom of God. Even in these 3 chapters, we can find out how absolutely and whole heartedly he preached the message. Whenever he visited a village, he entered into a synagogue and began teach; he traveled throughout Galilee to preach; whenever and wherever the people gathered around him, he began to teach. (1:21,39, 2:3,13,3:1)

Because of his powerful teaching and healing ministry, everyone loved him and looked for him. (1:37) Jesus could have enjoy such fame and popularity, even for a while. But Jesus said, "Let us go somewhere else- to the nearby villages – so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." Preaching the kingdom of God was not his hobby nor second job. It is the reason he came. The kingdom of God is always in his prayer first. "Your kingdom come." The most important and urgent message Jesus delivered was definitely the message of the Kingdom of God. Why is it so?

Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Because of sin, we lost the kingdom of God, and became slaves under the power of sin and death. Simply put, we were doomed to death. In this hopeless world, Jesus came to give us the kingdom of God through repentance and faith in the good news. "The Kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" For all sinners, this message has ever been the best one which brings them to the kingdom of God; which give them the living hope. The kingdom of God means to be free from the power of sin and death, but to have eternal life with our Lord Jesus. How can we have this wonderful kingdom of God? "Repent and believe the good news!" Thought it is very simple, it is a matter of eternal life or eternal death. That is why Jesus proclaimed the message with all his heart.

Here we learn that Jesus has the message of the kingdom of God – the word of God - which he held to preach, teach, and live by. People were amazed at his teaching and said, "What is this? A new teaching and with

authority." Later Peter confessed that he had followed Jesus for he had the words of eternal life. Without the words of truth, no one can be a shepherd nor a leader. How can one be a leader not knowing the way and the truth? I have seen many spiritual leaders who struggled hard to have the word of truth as a matter of life and death. Without the word of truth, they would have been tempted, hindered, compromised, or swayed away by the lies of the world; they would have become opportunists. I have heard that for over 10 years Bonn UBF had the same Year key verse - "Have faith in God." (Mark11:22) I respect and followed M. John in NJ for he has one word of God to preach with life giving spirit; "You give them something eat!" May we also have this message of the kingdom of God which we may preach, teach and live by.

Second, Jesus called his disciples. (1:16-20, 2:13-17) Look at verses 16-17. "...As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew..." "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." in verses 19-20, Jesus saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John... Without delay he called them..." Look at verses 2:14. "... As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alpheus..." "Follow me" Jesus told him..." Though it was the beginning of his ministry, Jesus called Simon, Andrew, James, John and later the tax collector Levi. His calling seems strange. Shouldn't he call one from among the professors, doctors, or experts in the law or Pharisees? It seems like Jesus started the work of God with losers. To me, none of them were qualified: Simon too big-mouthed and too fat; Andrew might have been too shy and timid; James might have been too ambitious and jealous; John might have been too emotional and sensitive; Levi, he might not even have been on the waiting list. However, each time Jesus called them, the Bible says "Jesus saw..." He definitely did not consider their any human conditions nor social backgrounds. What then, did he look at?

When Jesus called Simon and Andrew, Jesus said "I will send you out to fish for people." –"I will make you fishers of men."(NIV) Also, he gave Simon a new name "Cephas," which means "Rock" when he met him for the first time. Jesus saw them with the Hope of God. That is why he said "I will make you fisher of men" and gave Simon a name "Cephas" to use him as a rock foundation for the work of God. Rather than their weaknesses or human conditions, Jesus focused on God's hope to make them shepherds, bible teachers for the world salvation work. He firmly believed that God would change them and greatly use them for the work of God.

Especially, we can learn God's hope for sinners through Levi. The fact is he was a completely hopeless sinner. Due to his selfishness, he rebelled against God and betrayed his own people. He was ostracized from the people in his society. Amazingly Jesus called him, saying "Follow me." Of course, people criticized Jesus for calling and having fellowship with such terrible sinner. Look at what Jesus said in 2:17. Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Jesus did not deny the fact that he was a sinner. But, Jesus saw him not with the eyes of a prosecutor, but with the eyes of a spiritual doctor. Jesus saw great potential in Levi that if he was healed from his selfishness, he would be a great man of God. Jesus found this wonderful hope of God for Levi to be a great shepherd for sinners like him, if only Jesus healed his sickness. Actually, that was what had happened to Levi. Jesus healed him and changed him from a selfish tax collector, Levi, into a great servant of God, Matthew. Since Jesus is the doctor, there is no hopeless sinners. Jesus will heal them, change them, and raise them up into a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. No Jesus means no hope! But, in Jesus, there is No Hopeless sinners.

When Jesus called them "Follow me," how did they respond? They immediately followed Jesus, leaving everything behind.

What a surprise! When they recognized God's hope for them, they made a decision to follow Jesus right away. Then, Jesus began to train them based on the hope of God. Though they had not been changed in a day, Jesus never gave up challenging them, rebuking them, teaching them with the word of truth for he firmly knew that each of them would be shepherds, bible teachers, and spiritual leaders. As Jesus believed, his disciples became spiritual leaders who changed the history of the world.

Last year on May, I visited Bonn to attend the Spring Bible conference and met a young girl from Canada who majored Politics! The servant of God told me that she would be great spiritual leader for the next generation. But, I doubted whether a politician would be a spiritual leader. Rather, I thought that she would be a hopeless one. When I met her again, I was amazed that such a hopeless girl has been changed into a beautiful mother of prayer and spiritual leader for the next generation within a year. What a wonderful change! Such wonderful change is possible when a shepherd sees a sheep with the hope of God and plants the hope in sheep's heart. Seeing someone with the hope of God requires Faith in God Almighty. RURP is young leaders group in NJ UBF. I was disappointed many times, serving them because of their selfishness and lack of faith; lack of commitment; lack of everything. I had great fear of losing them if I rebuked nor trained them. This reveals the problem of my lack of faith in God. I repented of my lack of faith. From January, we started Bible study - "Who Jesus is" - from John's gospel in small groups. Then, I came to find a little hope of God for each of them and began to encourage them and even rebuke them with the hope of God. Then, God had richly blessed our Spring Bible Conference by raising up 4 powerful messengers and 5 testimony sharers from RURP. I could see the power of God's hope. There is an old saying "Praise make a whale dance." I have learned that the hope of God will change a sinner into a man of God. This hope is not based on human

conditions, but on Jesus, our good shepherd. Because of Jesus, we have hope to be healed and to be changed, and to be a great bible teachers and shepherds. Please pray for me that I may see the hope of God for each of RURP members and firmly believe that God will raise them up as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Third, Jesus healed the sick and drove out demons out. Since Jesus healed a man who was possessed by an impure spirit in 1:21-22, people brought to him all the sick and demon possessed. Jesus welcomed them and cared for them one by one until all of them were taken care of. (1:32-34) In 1:40-45, the leper came to Jesus and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean!" How did Jesus respond to his request? "Jesus was indignant." Why? Did the leper request too much? Jesus saw how sin disfigured his inner man just like the leprosy disfigured his physical body. Sin had disfigured the beautiful image of God in him with sense of condemnation, anger, hatred, grudge against God and others. He became a spiritual leper. Jesus was indignant because such beautiful, talented children of God suffered from sin and become Spiritual lepers under the power of sin and death. What did Jesus do for him? "He reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing. Be clean." Though it was against laws and regulations, Jesus touched him out of compassion. Touching him, Jesus wanted him to know that God loves him; God welcomes him; God is willing to make him clean.

In chapter 2:1-12, Jesus had healed a paralyzed man. To heal him, Jesus risked his own life. When four friends brought the man, Jesus blessed their faith by giving him the forgiveness of sins, saying "Son, your sins are forgiven." The religious leaders were supposed to praise the amazing grace and accept Jesus as the Son of God. Rather, they accused him as a blasphemer. Then, Jesus declared his authority to forgive sins as the Son of God by healing the paralyzed man. He said, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up,

took his mat and walked. In 3:1-6, the religious leaders made a trap to accuse Jesus if he would heal a man with a shriveled on the Sabbath. The people, who lived under the leadership of such religious leaders, were suffering endlessly with all kinds of diseases and demon- possession. Jesus was deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts.

Jesus healed the man right in front of them, saying "Which is lawful on the Sabbath; to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" Jesus was indignant when God's children become like lepers under the power of sin. Jesus was deeply distressed when the religious leaders became so evil.

Jesus taught the word of God, the message of the kingdom of God. Jesus called his disciples; Jesus healed all kinds of sick people, risking his own life and challenging against the evil religious leaders. Then what happened? Look at verses 7-12. When they heard about all he was doing, many people came to Jesus from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan, and around Tyre and Sidon. The religious leaders accused Jesus as the law breaker or blasphemer. However, the people were running to Jesus. The people saw how he accepted them; how he loved them; how he touched them; and how he healed them. The people followed Jesus because obviously they knew Jesus was their shepherd. Sin made them hopeless, but Jesus' compassion healed them and filled them with the hope of God. Simply reading what Jesus said in this passages, I come to know the heart of Jesus. I come to know why people followed Jesus. "I am willing, Be clean: Son, your sins are forgiven; I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home; It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners; What is lawful on the Sabbath; to do good or to do evil; to save life or to kill?" Jesus is indeed good shepherd. Then his sheep follows him. Jesus was their shepherd and they followed him. Jesus is our shepherd and we follow him. His leadership comes from his broken heart for the suffering people.

### 1. Jesus called the disciples. (3:13-19)

Seeing the people came to him from all around, Jesus went up on a mountainside. It was not to avoid the crowd, but to pray. Definitely what the people need is not religious leaders, nor political leaders, but above all, compassionate shepherds. That was why Jesus called the disciples after much prayer. (Lk6:12-13). Look at verse 3:13. "Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him." As we studied in Part 2, Jesus called his disciples and they had already been following him. But here Jesus specifically called 12 disciples and appointed them as apostles with a clear mission vision statement. Isn't 12 too small to serve the world? Why didn't Jesus call thousands instead of 12? The work of God does not depend on numbers; it depends on the quality of the spiritual leadership. Jesus only raised up the Twelve, yet Jesus changed the history of the world through them. Our UBF ministry is Jesus' discipleship training ministry that raise a few spiritual leaders who can create new history of God. Through GLEF 2018, God has raised 7 staffs - young spiritual leaders and God is creating New History of God through them. Let us pray that God may raise up 32 New staffs through GLEF 2019 and create new history of God through them. Whom did Jesus call?

First of all, "Jesus called to him those he wanted." How did we become Jesus' disciples? Because Jesus wanted us and called us! We are not called by man or an organization, but by God's absolute sovereignty. Jesus' call cannot be cancelled, even when we make mistakes and fall into sins. (Ro11:29) With this assurance of calling, we can follow Jesus in any circumstances; we can take deep root in Jesus even through difficulties. How would you respond? What was the respond of those who called by Jesus? Verse 13b says "...and they came to him." They responded with great joy and immediate obedience, leaving their old life

behind. They could respond in this way because they accepted the hope of God to be shepherds and spiritual leaders like Jesus.

Look at verses 14-15. "He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons." How was Jesus going to train them to be disciples – spiritual leaders like Jesus?

First, Jesus calls them to be with him. When Jesus called them, he said "Come, follow me." (1:17) "Follow me." (2:14) The first and most important thing to do is to be with Jesus and to follow Jesus. In other words, it is to learn Jesus. In fact, Jesus invited them to "life together" with him. They became Jesus' roommates and able to see Jesus' daily life from early morning till late at night. Jesus wanted to be with the disciples so that they might learn not just a part of his life, but everything from Jesus in their daily lives. In this way, Jesus could have a personal love relationship with them. By being with Jesus the disciples were fundamentally transformed into Jesus-like people. To be Jesus' disciples, we must first and foremost be with Jesus. To be with Jesus means to meditate his words and hear his words and have fellowship with him on a daily basis; It means to seek his will rather than what we want. It means to learn Jesus in our practical lives and imitate Jesus' image.

Second, Jesus calls them to send out to preach. Jesus had the hope to preach the gospel to all creation and make disciples of all nations through the 12 disciples. For this purpose, Jesus called them to be Bible teachers. God's hope for them is not a fisher in Galilee, but witnesses to the ends of the earth, fulfilling God's world salvation work.

Third, Jesus calls them to give the authority to drive out demons. Demons have the power to completely ruin one's life. But Jesus gave authority to his disciples to drive them out through his word truth.

The twelve disciples of Jesus were just ordinary people. But Jesus called them with the hope of God to raise them as spiritual leaders for the work of salvation. Through these 12 disciples, God has changed the world. Discipleship ministry is truly God's wisdom to reach out to all sinners, even to every corner of the world. Is it amazing that M. Peter Kim who was born in a small village in South Korea and worshipped Buddha had heard the gospel of Jesus, and today he is delivering the message of the gospel in Bonn and Mainz Spring Bible Conference? How could this be possible? It is through Jesus' discipleship ministry. The country boy could hear the gospel because one shepherd delivered the gospel with life-giving spirit. Because of him, I followed Jesus. Jesus called them not to build up another religious parties, but to raise up spiritual leaders who has the gospel message – the word of life, God's hope for sinners, and the compassionate heart for others.

In this first part of Mark's gospel, we have learned the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Jesus began his ministry by proclaiming the good news and healing many sick and demon-possessed. Most of all, Jesus called the disciples and appointed them as apostles.. No Jesus, no Hope. In Jesus, there is no hopeless sinners. There are many powerful and brilliant political leaders, religious leaders, social leaders, or economics leaders. They are not the people Jesus calls to change the world. Jesus calls those he wants to be his disciples with great hope to raise them as spiritual leaders who have the gospel – the words of God, God's hope for sinners, and the compassion for the lost.

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