

# Called for the Kingdom

Most people would like to know what is God's will for their lives. Students, young adults, mid-life adults, retiring adults – all will often ask this fundamental question as it pertains to schooling, career choices, marriage decisions, schools for their children, where to live, etc.

Our text today actually gives us the ultimate answer to these concerns by answering three profound questions in life:

What is the meaning of all history?

What is my role in history?

And, what must I do to fulfill my role?

## Mark 1:14-20

<sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

<sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> And Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” <sup>18</sup> And immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.

### I. Jesus makes a radical announcement. (1:14,15)

Jesus, like John the Baptist before Him, announces a major regime change on earth, and unlike John the Baptist, He does not point to another but rather to Himself as the One to inaugurate this new regime. Jesus spends most of His teaching time over the next three years explaining the meaning of this new Kingdom. Furthermore, He said that this Kingdom is “good news” (gospel), even though John has been arrested (“handed over”), just as He, too will one day be handed over (Mark 15:1), as well as ourselves (Mark 13: 8, 11, 12). In spite of all outward appearances, Jesus calls on His disciples to “believe in the good news” that His coming will one day bring God's promised shalom. This is the meaning of all human and natural history.

### II. Jesus issues a radical calling. (1:16-17)

Unlike the other rabbis of His day, Jesus recruits His own disciples. In light of the coming of the Kingdom, He calls us to do two things. This is our life's vocation:

#### A. Follow

We not only must learn the truth from Him, but also imitate His whole life. And why would we do that? Because it is life's greatest privilege to be with Him!

#### B. Fish

Jesus invites us to participate in His ministry. In Matthew 28:8-20, Jesus tells us to “make disciples.”

### III. We must give a radical response. (1:18-20)

#### A. All, not part.

As with Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 and Elisha in I Kings 17:19-21, we, like the first disciples, must give everything to Him: our time, our money, our relationships, our recreations, our conversations, our political involvements – everything.

**B. Now, not later.**

To say to Jesus, "I'm not ready" is the same as saying "no." The only obedience which is worthy of His majesty is complete, immediate obedience.

**Discussion Questions**

1. How is Jesus' concept of the Kingdom of God similar to the first century Jewish idea? How is it different?
2. How is the biblical idea of vocation different from mere occupation?
3. What is the biggest challenge for most Christians today in following Jesus?
4. Why do we not "fish for men" as we ought? What is the solution?
5. What are ways in which church people today offer partial obedience or delayed obedience to Jesus? What effect does that have on our souls?