

SKY Correspondence Course

Lesson 1

Jesus' Ministry Begins

Lesson Text: Mark 1:14-28

The account of the gospel message from Mark can be best understood from one verse: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). For approximately 30 years Jesus had prepared for His public ministry (Luke 3:23). Mark moves quickly, telling how Jesus began His ministry here on earth. As in anything in life, *when* we begin is very important. If you were running a race and started too soon, you would be disqualified. If you started too late, you would probably lose the race. The ministry of Jesus began at the exact time it was supposed to. Jesus began His ministry in Galilee. During Jesus' time, Galilee was a thriving and busy area. There may have been as many as 240 villages with as many as 2 million people populating the area. The people were known for their pottery, weaving, glass-making, fishing, trading, and farming.

Jesus Announces His Kingdom

Read Mark 1:14—As you can read in John 3:22-30, John the Baptist continued preaching and baptizing even after Jesus started His ministry. John, spoken of in this verse, is John the Baptist. Herod the tetrarch did not like John the Baptist rebuking him for his adulterous marriage to his brother Philip's wife (Matthew 14:3,4; Luke 3:19,20). This is why he was in

prison when Jesus began His ministry.

Read Mark 1:15—Jesus made two declarations right off" "The time has come" and "The kingdom of God is near." The Jews of Jesus' day understood very well what this meant, they were familiar with Old Testament prophecy (read 2 Samuel 7:8-17; Isaiah 11:1-9; 24:23). Jesus then gives a double command: "Repent and believe the gospel." *Repent* means to feel sorrow or regret for a sin or an error and then turn away from that sin. *Believe* means to have faith. Jesus wants you to turn away from sin and believe in Him, the Son of God, the One who is the gospel. *Gospel* means "Good News." The Good News is that God has provided a way for all of mankind to be a part of His family in the Kingdom of God.

Jesus Calls Four Fishermen To Be Disciples

Read Mark 1:16-20—The Sea of Galilee was also known as the Sea of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1) and the Sea of Tiberias (John 6:1). In Luke 5:1-11, Luke tells how Jesus had spent the day preaching from the boat of the fishermen to a crowd that had gathered on the shore. Jesus went out and sought His followers, unlike a rabbi that a student would seek. Jesus used words that Simon and Andrew would understand when He said, "I will make you to become fishers of men." They were now to gather people for Christ and His kingdom. Just as

fishermen know and understand how to fish, they would need to know and understand how to gather people for Jesus. Fish did not seek them out to be caught; nor would people (for the most part) seek them out to understand the gospel. They went immediately with Jesus. Both men had known about Jesus and His miracles prior to this event (John 1:35-42; 2:1-12,23). Luke 5:7,10 tell about how James and John were Peter and Andrew's partners in the fishing business. All four men—Peter, Andrew, James, and John—left their fishing business behind and followed Jesus straightway. Interesting Fact: The word *straightway* is used four times in this story and nineteen times in the book of Mark.

Jesus Taught With Authority

Read Mark 1:21,22—Capernaum was a fishing village located on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. When Jesus taught, the listeners were astonished. They were in awe, overwhelmed! They were in awe because of the content of what Jesus said and how He said it. The other teachers quoted and interpreted the law. Jesus spoke with authority and taught from firsthand experience. His was not just “book knowledge” that He enlightened His listeners with; He was the *author* of the book. Let's remember where Jesus had been living prior to coming to earth.

Jesus Expels Demons

Read Mark 1:23,24—While at the synagogue in Capernaum, Jesus demonstrated His authority by removing a demon from a man. The unclean spirit could be referred to as an evil spirit or demon. Do not confuse this with the devil, Satan. This unclean spirit knew exactly who Jesus was (read James 2:19). Jesus was a threat to the evil spirit's activities and power. When the one spirit spoke in the plural—“Let us alone; what have *we* to do with thee...?”—it spoke representing its kind. This spirit knew why Jesus was here on earth “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the

works of the devil” (1 John 3:8). When this unclean spirit asked, “Art thou come to destroy us?” it was not a new question (read Matthew 8:29). Demons know their day of judgment is coming; they just don't know when.

Read Mark 1:25,26—In the presence of Jesus, the evil spirit's departure from the man was noisy but harmless. In other words, the evil spirit's bark was greater than his bite. There was no fancy formula for removing the evil spirit. Jesus, showing His authority, commanded, “Hold thy peace, and come out.”

Something to think about: When you allow yourself to be a slave to sin, drugs, alcohol, bad friends, and impure habits, the power of these sins do not leave quietly. It is hard and sometimes uncomfortable to break off a bad friendship or a habit that hurts your body. However, remember that continuing to be a slave to sin brings far more conflict and worse consequences than changing your ways and turning to Jesus for help.

Read Mark 1:27,28—The people were surprised and amazed by two events of the day: the teachings of Jesus, and His removal of a demon with a simple command. The events that occurred in the synagogue on this Sabbath day were shared throughout the region of Galilee.

There are *three* important elements in this story that stand out:

1. The word *straightway*. The ministry of Jesus began on time and actively.
2. Jesus' power and authority. He showed this with words and deeds.
3. The means whereby Jesus gathered His disciples. For the three years of Jesus' ministry, He taught His disciples how to be fishers of men.

A verse worthy to remember from this story:
“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the gospel”
(Mark 1:15).

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Date: _____
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Questions and Answers

1. Where did Jesus begin His ministry?
 - A. Galilee
 - B. Capernaum
 - C. Nazareth
2. Who is the John spoken of in verse 14 of Mark 1?
 - A. John the brother of Jesus
 - B. John the Baptist
 - C. John the apostle
3. How old was Jesus when He began His ministry and what is the scripture that supports the answer?
 - A. Approximately 28–Luke 10:3
 - B. Exactly 30–Matthew 5:7
 - C. Approximately 30–Luke 3:23
4. What does *repent* mean?
 - A. Go back and try again.
 - B. Feel sorrow or regret for a sin or an error.
 - C. Know that what you did was wrong and try to do better next time.
5. What does *believe* mean?
 - A. To have faith
 - B. To know right from wrong
 - C. To act from your heart
6. What were the two declarations Jesus made from the start in Mark 1:15?

7. What does *Gospel* mean?
 - A. To repent
 - B. To believe
 - C. Good News

8. Jesus told the fishermen that He would make them “fishers of men” (Mark 1:17). How can we apply that statement to us today?

9. What would be the right kind of bait to catch people with?
- A. The gospel of the coming Kingdom of God.
 - B. If you don't join this organization, you will burn in hell—fear.
 - C. When you die, you go to heaven.

10. True or False—The evil spirit in our story knew who Jesus was. _____

11. True or False—To receive salvation, it is enough to know who Jesus is. _____

12. True or False—We must allow Jesus to have control over our lives so that we may receive the gift of the Kingdom of God. _____

13. What was different about the way Jesus taught that made the people so amazed?

14. Zebedee was the father of:

- A. James and Peter
- B. Peter and John
- C. James and John

15. How can you go about serving Christ today?

16. There were three important elements in this story. Explain them in your own words.

Answers

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1. A
2. B
3. C
4. C
5. A
6. "The time has come" and "The Kingdom of God is near".
7. C
8. We are to gather (catch) people to Christ. Set a good example, know what we believe and go where people need help.
9. A
10. T
11. F
12. T
13. Jesus spoke with authority. He was the Author of the Book, the Bible. He taught from His own experiences. The people were amazed by what He said and how He said it.
14. C
15. I can go about serving Him today by being obedient, loving, kind and honest. I can repent of my sins and work to be the best I can be.
16.
 1. Jesus began His ministry at the right time. The word which means this is straightway.
 2. Jesus has power and authority which He shows us through His actions and what He tells us.
 3. Jesus taught His disciples how to gather others to follow Jesus and His example.