



## **Introduction\***

The Gospel of Mark emphasizes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus announced the Kingdom of God, healed the sick, and died as a ransom for sinners. In addition to Jesus, Mark features three main groups of people: the disciples, the crowds, and the religious leaders, none of whom understood Jesus. When the time came for Jesus to go to the cross, the religious leaders arrested him, the disciples abandoned him, and the crowds jeered him. Only when he died alone on the cross did a Roman centurion recognize that he was the Son of God.

## **“The Reign of God Has Come Near”**

### **Mark 1:9-20**

<sup>9</sup> It was in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan River by John. <sup>10</sup> Suddenly, while he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens splitting apart and the spirit, like a dove, descending into him. <sup>11</sup> A voice came from the heavens, “You are my son, the one I love! I am pleased with you!” <sup>12</sup> Immediately the spirit cast him out into the wilderness <sup>13</sup> and he was in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the adversary. He was among wild animals and messengers were serving him. <sup>14</sup> Now after John was given over, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God, <sup>15</sup> saying, “The time is fulfilled and the reign of God has come near! Because of the gospel, transform and be faithful!” <sup>16</sup> As he passed beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw the fishermen, Simon and his brother Andrew, casting nets into the sea. <sup>17</sup> Jesus said to them, “Come, follow me! I will make you fishers of men!” <sup>18</sup> Releasing their nets, they immediately followed him. <sup>19</sup> After advancing a little, he saw James the son of Zebedee and his brother John as they were mending their nets in the boat. <sup>20</sup> Immediately he called them and, after releasing their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired workers, they followed him.

*What does John being “given over” illustrate?*

*What is the gospel that Jesus came proclaiming?*

*What is the “reign of God”?*

*What does Jesus’ call and the responses of Simon, Andrew, James and John teach us?*

*What does it mean to be “fishers for men”?*

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\* Ryken, L. (Ed.). (2011). The ESV and the English Bible legacy. Wheaton, IL: Crossway. The ESV Preface, Explanation of Features, introductions to each book of the Bible: Mark