The Ministry of Jesus According to Mark

Lesson 1: Serving With Compassion

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LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To introduce students to the Gospel of Mark and its author, Mark
2. To reveal that Jesus' ministry was one of compassion and service to others
3. To inspire students to make their lives about the same things.

Topics

Caring, Compassion, Following Jesus, Healing, Serving

Scripture Memorization

Mark 1:17

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

**Scooter Ball (Game)**

Scooter Ball

This game will have kids flying around the room by the seat of their pants.

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| Topics:Icebreaker, Just For FunMaterials:Two laundry basketsSoft ball or a pair of rolled up socksDuration:Approximately 10 minutes     |  Scooter Ball |

What you will do during class:

Set up two laundry baskets at either side of your meeting space. Throw out a soft ball or other soft object (rolled up socks, etc.).

The object of the game is kind of like basketball—to get the ball into the other team's basket. However, all students must be seated on the ground, and they are not allowed to get up…not even on their knees. Students are only allowed to pass or shoot the ball using their non-dominate hands.

Happy scooting!

GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

Split your class up into three or four groups. Give each a concordance or let them use computer software that searches the Bible. ([www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com/) is one such online tool.)

Have each group search for “Mark” and “John Mark.” After a few minutes of research, have them report what they’ve found.

If you don’t have access to a concordance or online tool, a list of passages where Mark is found is shown below.

Acts 12:12—his house was a hub of ministry, his mom’s name was Mary
Acts 12:25—returned to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Saul
Acts 15:37-39—deserted Paul and Barnabas in Pamphylia, caused a disagreement between Paul and Barnabas, went on to minister with Barnabas in Cyprus
Colossians 4:10—apparently patched things up with Paul, was perhaps a fellow prisoner with Paul, was Barnabas’ cousin
2 Timothy 4:11—Paul requested that he come to him, along with Luke
Philemon 1:24—was with Paul and sent greetings to Philemon
1 Peter 5:13—was very close with Peter as well

That’s great! As it turns out, we know quite a bit about this guy named Mark. Now, let’s get started learning a lot about his Gospel. Turn to Mark 1.

DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

Mark 1 covers a lot of ground. In the beginning of the chapter, Jesus’ ministry has just started, but by the end of the chapter, Jesus is so popular He can’t go anywhere without a crowd. We don’t have time to cover everything in detail, but getting an overview of this first chapter will help us understand the rest of this great book as we continue our study.

**Read Mark 1:1-13**

**Discussion Questions:** 1. What’s missing here that you would expect from a Gospel account? *(The story of the birth of Jesus.)*2. Why do you think Mark skips this important event?

The truth is, Mark is mostly concerned with Jesus' ministry. He is a gentile writing to gentiles. He is going to expose them to Jesus' teachings and miracles, and not spend a lot of time on other stuff. In fact, his favorite word is “immediately.” We’ll see it over 40 times in just 16 chapters of Mark's Gospel.

**Discussion Questions (continued):** 3. What other historical figure does Mark use to introduce Jesus? *(John the Baptist.)*4. What does John say of Jesus in verses 7-8? *(He is more powerful and will baptize with the Holy Spirit.)*5. From where does Jesus enter the picture? *(Nazareth, His home town.)*6. What is the first thing Jesus does, according to verse 9? *(Has John baptize him.)*7. One more event precedes Jesus' ministry. What is it? *(His temptation.)*

Jesus was baptized and tempted. Mark’s inclusion of these two events affirm that Jesus was fully human, just like us. We can relate to Him. He identified with us in every way.

**Read Mark 1:14-20**

**Discussion Questions:**1. Simon, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen. What kind of people do you think they were? *(Probably rough, tough guys. Uneducated blue-collar workers.)*2. Verse 18 says they followed Jesus “at once.” What does this urgency teach us? *(We should not hesitate in our obedience. The message is too important!)*3. Jesus states He will make them “fishers of men.” What does this mean? *(They will go out and evangelize to other people.)*4. What would it mean for you to be a fisher of men? What would you have to give up to do it?

Split students into four groups. Ask each group to read one of the following passages: Mark 1:21-28, 29-34, 35-39, and 40-45. Have each group tell the rest of the class what happened in the passages they read. Optional idea: Ask each group to act out a short skit which demonstrates the events of their passage instead.**General Discussion:**• What do these four stories have in common? *(They all involve great acts of healing and miracles.)*• Which miracle impresses you the most? Why?

Mark will spend a lot of time reporting miracles that Jesus performed during his ministry.

• What qualities does Jesus demonstrate through these accounts? *(power, compassion, humanity, etc.)*• How would you define compassion? *(caring about others, etc.)*• Why do you think these stories immediately follow the calling of the disciples? Is there some connection? What could it be? *(If you want to follow Jesus, you must be prepared to serve, be compassionate, etc.)*

If we truly want to be “fishers of men” and understand what Jesus is all about, we have to be aware that there are needs all around us. And, like Jesus, we need to “immediately” set about the task of meeting them. We may not be able to cast out demons or perform miracles—as some of His followers did in Scripture--but we can help people.

MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)

**General Discussion:**
• What impresses you the most about this introduction to Jesus' ministry?
• What did you learn that you never knew before?
• If you were Peter, Andrew, or one of the other disciples, how do you think you would feel about Jesus so far?
• If you were one of the people who witnessed one of these miracles, how would you be different after having seen it?

There are all sorts of needs around us. I hope you’ve been moved to recognize that Jesus wants us to be about meeting needs.

CLOSING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

Invite students to get back in small groups. Have them each share one need they know exists in their home, school, or community. Encourage them to make a plan to meet that need in Jesus’ name. Then, have each group pray for each other that they can live a life filled with Christ’s compassion. When they are all done, pray for your students to close out the day.