



WEEK OF 08/30/26

CALLED AND SENT

MARK 1-3

Silence (1-2 minutes)

Sit silently for a minute as a way to center your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to help you listen to and receive God's Word.

Opening Prayer (2-3 minutes)

Read: Mark 1:16-20; 2:13-17; 3:12-19

Devotional

Jarvis Williams, a seminary professor, had an insightful title for a devotional he once wrote: "You Can't Try Out for God's Team." Every day coaches are tasked with choosing players based on their performance and skill. Some make the team. Others do not. Thankfully, this is not the case with the Kingdom of God. When God chooses his "team," it isn't based on our performance or skill. Children of God do not have to try out to be adopted into God's family. In our devotional for today, we reflect on the question: *How did Jesus Christ call His team?* Well, the answer is our Big Idea for today: ***Jesus doesn't wait until we're worthy before He calls us. Instead, He calls us, and his call makes the unworthy, worthy.***

1. Have you ever tried out for a team or club? If so, please share about your experience and what it was like.

Mark 1:16-20 – Called on the Shoreline | In Mark's gospel, Jesus hits the ground running with a clear, simple sermon: *It's time. Trust and turn. The Kingdom of God is here!* During this time, Jesus passes along the sea of Galilee and summons Simon and Andrew: "Come after me and I will make you become fishers of people." In response, they "immediately" dropped their nets and followed Him (v. 18). By the way, "immediately" is one of Mark's favorite words, which he uses 42 times. Mark's purpose is to highlight Jesus's commanding and authoritative presence. According to Mark, Jesus doesn't negotiate. He doesn't force them to follow but those who follow Him do so under the force of His call.

2. One theme that arises in Mark 1:16-20 is that Jesus takes the initiative. Where do we see this?

3. Imagine for a moment that you are Simon or Andrew. What would be going through your mind if Jesus approached you in this way?
4. What do you think is the significance of the phrase, "*I will make you become*" fishers of people?

Mark 2:13-17 – Called at the Booth | This scene is meant to offend us! Levi (or Matthew) collected taxes for Herod. Tax collecting in that day was a corrupt, dirty business. Expressly, it was legalized extortion. Well, in this scene, Jesus approaches Levi and basically says, "Are you hungry? Let's have a meal at your house." In response, Levi gets up immediately! Mark is showing that a disciple is a sinner who has responded to the call of Christ. The only prerequisite to becoming a disciple is that you first be a sinner who has stopped resisting Christ and responded to His call.

5. Have you ever witnessed somebody who you disliked (with good reason!) turn to Christ? If so, how did the whole situation make you feel?
6. Can you recall a time when you were in Levi's position and Jesus approached you? When did Jesus first pursue you and invite you to have fellowship together?
7. Reflect on the following quote: "*The sinner who knows he's sick is nearer to God than the righteous who thinks he's fine.*"

Mark 3:13-19 – Called up the Mountain | Jesus' trek up the mountain is an unmistakable echo of Moses going up Mount Sinai. The twelve apostles represent the twelve leaders of the New Israel! Anyways, here on the mountain, Jesus lays out three purpose statements for his disciples (see v. 14). First, Christ's apostles were to be with Him – to enjoy His company. Second, they were to preach the good news. Third, they were to oppose evil by casting out demons. Afterwards, Jesus names each of them, signifying how they were real people – just like you and me.

8. Reflect a few moments on the word "desire" in verse 13. What does this teach us about the heart of Christ?
9. Read verse 14 and reflect on the three purposes Jesus lays out for His newly called disciples. Which of the three resonate with you in this current season? How might the Lord be inviting you to apply His Word?

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you that you are the God who initiates. Thank you for these powerful examples where you called and assembled your team. Thank you for being the One who makes the unworthy worthy. Help us to know that you love and desire us. Help us to remember that you know us by name. In the days ahead, please give us the attentiveness to hear the call of your voice. We desire to serve you and your Kingdom, all the days of our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Share Prayer Requests (10-15 minutes)