

Sermon Discussion Questions

Speaker: Dr. Stephen Burrell

Topic: The Men Who Changed the World

Scriptures: Mark 1:12–20; 2:13–17

Opening:

Open your time in prayer by thanking God for calling ordinary people to follow Him, asking for faith to trust what He has said, and praying for a willingness to follow Jesus closely in everyday life.

Give Background & Context:

This passage moves quickly from Jesus' baptism into the wilderness and then into the calling of His first disciples. It shows both the reality of testing and the purpose of calling. Jesus is affirmed as the Son of God, tested in the wilderness, and then begins gathering ordinary people to follow Him and join His mission.

- Read Mark 1:12–13
 - What stands out about the transition from Jesus' baptism to the wilderness? Why is this shift significant?
 - What does it mean that the Spirit "drove" Jesus into the wilderness?
 - How does the temptation of Jesus relate to what God had just declared about Him at His baptism?
 - What are some ways people can learn to trust what God has said, even in seasons that feel like a wilderness?
- Read Mark 1:14–20
 - What is the message Jesus begins preaching in verses 14–15? Why is it central to everything that follows?
 - How does Jesus call His first disciples, and what is unique about the way He does it? What does it mean when Jesus says He will make them "fishers of men"?
 - How do the disciples respond, and what does their response reveal about the nature of following Jesus? What does this section teach about leaving behind old identities to take on a new purpose?
- Read Mark 2:13–17
 - What stands out about Jesus calling Levi (a tax collector)? Why would this have been surprising?
 - How do the religious leaders respond to Jesus eating with sinners, and what does that reveal about their perspective?
 - What does Jesus mean when He says He came to call sinners, not the righteous? How does this passage expand our understanding of who Jesus calls and why?
 - What does it look like for someone to be shaped by Jesus' mission of reaching others?
- Sermon Reflection Questions
 - The sermon emphasized believing what God says about you, especially in difficult seasons. Why is it often harder to trust God's truth in the "wilderness" than in moments of clarity?
 - Jesus called ordinary, "passed over" people to follow Him. What does that reveal about how God chooses and uses people?
 - Following a rabbi in Jesus' day meant total commitment and imitation. What does it look like for believers today to follow Jesus that closely?
 - The phrase "fishers of men" points to a new purpose. How does following Jesus reshape a person's direction and priorities?