



KING'S CROSS

SERMON STUDY GUIDE: WEEK 1 - DR. THOMAS WEST

THE KING OF GOD'S KINGDOM

Mark 1:14-20

We have a deep desire for a king to come and save us. The major stories in our culture go something like this: “Some day, a king will return to slay the dragon, free me from this tower, and bring me into his safe kingdom.” We all have a sense that this is an enchanted world with a king who will rule over a kingdom. Jesus is that true King that our hearts desire.

While we like the idea of King Jesus, we want him on our own terms and not as he really is. All across our city, everyone seems to be talking about Jesus and how they want some affiliation with him, but we have our terms and conditions for what we want a relationship with Jesus to be like.

This is King's Cross. We're into a three-month study of the biography of Jesus on Sunday mornings at Nashville First. The first eight chapters of the Gospel of Mark show us Jesus Christ, the unexpected King of a different sort of Kingdom. The second eight chapters show us King Jesus journeying to the cross where he will give us life for our salvation.

In Mark 1:14-20, we hear Jesus speaking for the first time. We learn...

1. Jesus always arrives at the right time. Mark 1:15

There are two words Jesus could have used to talk about time: *chronos*, which refers to a specific moment in time, or *kairos*, which refers to the culminating moment at the end of a season. Jesus walks onto the scene and says, “the *kairos* have come.” This means Jesus understood himself to be the great purpose the Father was preparing.

2. Jesus fulfills our deepest desires. Mark 1:15

The word “kingdom” occurs 162 times in the New Testament. What does it mean? The Kingdom of God refers to God's reign through God's people over God's place. Where God is acknowledged, where his subjects are saved, where his enemies are vanquished, where his ways are obeyed, there we see the coming of the kingdom. Jesus taught his followers to “seek first the kingdom” (Matthew 6:33) and to pray “Your kingdom come, your will be done” (Matthew 6:11).

2. Jesus demands our absolute allegiance. Mark 1:15

Jesus preached that people should repent (change their minds) and believe (see Acts 20:21). To follow him, you must stop going your own way, turn around, and move to him. Repentance of sins and belief in Jesus are necessary to be saved.

4. Jesus greatly expands our lives. Mark 1:17

Jesus issues a bold command: Follow me. This is not an offer or an invitation. This is a command that can only be met with obedience or disobedience. In Jeremiah 16:16, these words were about judgment, but now the image shifts as Jesus takes on himself the judgment of the world. Luke 14:26 teaches us that we must go “ALL IN” to follow Jesus. This means there is no room for “moderation” regarding following Jesus. Following Jesus greatly changed the lives of those first fishermen. They were transformed from small town and provincial to world-traveling and world-changing individuals. They became theologians, thinkers, sociologists, psychologists, and strategists—all because of the gospel. Jesus Christ has not changed. He still expands the lives of all who follow him.



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