

# HEALING AND CALLING

CORE PASSAGE: MARK 3:7-19

## CONTEXT

Have you ever been in a huge crowd, feeling pressed in by people on every side? That's what Jesus experienced at many points in His public ministry. Everyone wanted in on the miracles, the healing, the blessing. Jesus felt compassion for the broken people seeking help. Yet Jesus had also come for something much bigger. In Mark 3, Jesus had begun His mission of salvation for all nations. To address the present problem of huge crowds and to look to the future after His resurrection, Jesus appointed twelve disciples and began preparing them for a lifetime of ministry.

## KEY CONCEPT

**When Jesus calls, His disciples obey to continue His mission.**

As you examine Mark 3:7-19:

- Reflect upon the fact that crowds came to see Jesus for healing, and Jesus showed compassion to them.
- Recognize that Jesus chose and equipped disciples to be with Him, to preach, and to reveal His power.



## TIMELINE

Jesus Demonstrates His Authority  
in Capernaum (Mark 1:21-34)

Jesus Forgives and Heals a  
Paralyzed Man (Mark 2:1-12)

**SESSION STUDY: Jesus Appoints His  
Twelve Disciples (Mark 3:7-19)**

Jesus Heals a Leprous Man  
(Mark 1:35-45)

Jesus Teaches About and Heals on  
the Sabbath (Mark 2:23-3:6)

### Daily Readings

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 1:</b> Mark 3:7-19  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 4:</b> Matthew 9:18-31 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 2:</b> Mark 3:20-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 5:</b> Matthew 9:32-38 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 3:</b> Mark 3:31-35 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 6:</b> Psalm 98        |



Scan this QR code to access  
this session's Scripture passages.

Notes



SCAN ME

**Bonus Content**

Scan this QR code to learn more about Jesus's strategy for beginning His ministry in Galilee.

**JESUS'S MISSION OF HEALING DREW CROWDS** (MARK 3:7-12).

**Circle each mention of the crowds and their size.**

**7** Jesus departed with his disciples to the sea, and a large crowd followed from Galilee, and a large crowd followed from Judea, **8** Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, and around Tyre and Sidon. The large crowd came to him because they heard about everything he was doing. **9** Then he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, so that the crowd wouldn't crush him. **10** Since he had healed many, all who had diseases were pressing toward him to touch him. **11** Whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God!" **12** And he would strongly warn them not to make him known.

Large crowds followed Jesus, those from Galilee, Judea, and places beyond as well, represented in the mention of the other towns: "Idumea, beyond the Jordan, and around Tyre and Sidon" (v. 8). Jesus was attracting all people, not just the Jews. And why were they following Him? "Because they heard about everything he was doing." They heard about the teaching, the healings, the casting out of demons, and the eating with sinners. Many followed Him because they wanted something from Him, with some believing His message and others maybe not so much. The crowds were so large that Jesus had to get on a boat so as not to be crushed. Everyone wanted to be near Jesus because everyone had a problem they wanted Him to fix. Every human lives in brokenness, and we're all trying to find something that will satisfy our souls.

**What could people hear about what the Lord is doing in and through your life?**

**LEADER NOTE:** The crowds gathered around Jesus in throngs early in His ministry, but as He taught more about the values of God's kingdom and confronted people with the hard truths of the gospel, many of those in the crowds fell away. They wanted Him as a miracle-worker, but they rejected Him as Lord and Savior. Much the same happens today. People come to Jesus to get something from Him, but they do not count the cost. When following Christ is going to cost them something, they are gone as quickly as they arrived.

**Key Concept:** When Jesus calls, His disciples obey to continue His mission.

Notes

People who needed healing from physical ailments came to Jesus, so too did those who needed healing from spiritual ailments or needed demons cast out of them. But demons, knowing who Jesus was, “fell down before him,” proclaiming His identity as the Son of God (v. 11). The unclean spirits feared Jesus because He is the One whom God promised since the beginning. When Adam and Eve were deceived by the serpent and humanity fell, God promised that One would come to crush the serpent (Gen. 3:15). He would save humanity by defeating the forces of evil and the power of sin. The demons recognized what the crowds did not—Jesus is the serpent-crusher—and they were terrified.

As Jesus gathered followers and worked miracles, His face was already set toward the cross. He already knew the suffering and the ultimate victory that lay ahead. The crowds, however, couldn't have imagined the wonders God had in store to bring about His people's salvation.

**LEADER NOTE:** Jesus's commands to others, even unclean spirits, in the Gospels not to reveal Him as the Son of God can seem really confusing. This is a concept known as the Messianic Secret.<sup>1</sup> Jesus fully knew the will of God throughout His mission on earth. He knew that God had sent Him to atone for sin through His death on the cross. He also knew that many of the Jews had been waiting for a messiah, for a king, who would provide physical salvation, not spiritual. If word of His identity spread too soon, the whole nation would be in an uproar, ready to crown Jesus as king and to declare war on their oppressors. That was not God's plan. So Jesus often told people to remain quiet about who He is so that He could focus on what He had come to do.

**How has Jesus shown Himself to be more than you thought He was at first in your own life?**

#### GOSPEL CONNECTION

Jesus calls us to follow Him. We are His disciples when we follow, obey, and trust in Him as Lord and Savior, preaching the good news to others.

## JESUS APPOINTED HIS DISCIPLES TO FURTHER HIS MISSION (MARK 3:13-19).

**Underline each thing Jesus did that set the twelve disciples apart from His other followers.**

**13** Jesus went up the mountain and summoned those he wanted, and they came to him. **14** He appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, to send them out to preach, **15** and to have authority to drive out demons. **16** He appointed the Twelve: To Simon, he gave the name Peter; **17** and to James the son of Zebedee, and to his brother John, he gave the name “Boanerges” (that is, “Sons of Thunder”); **18** Andrew; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, **19** and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

This passage is an important moment in the Bible. When Jesus called and set apart the twelve disciples, He laid the foundation for His church. These men, with the exception of one, would carry the good news of Jesus’s death and resurrection and His offer of salvation to the ends of the earth.

What Jesus was doing is called discipleship. He invited these men into His life, taught them, and then equipped them to do the same works that He was doing. As Jesus invested in these men, He knew they would change the very course of human history. His followers would become known as “men who have turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6).

**LEADER NOTE:** While it is true we are called to the same mission the disciples were called to, it is important to note that these men were given a unique office and role by Jesus. After Jesus’s death and resurrection, Jesus as the risen Lord personally commissioned these men to begin the work of global evangelization. They had special authority to lead the church, and it was through many of them that God did the special work of inspiring the writing of the New Testament. One criterion for inclusion of a book in the New Testament was a connection to one of the apostles in its authorship.

### WORD STUDY

**APOSTLES:** The word used to describe the Twelve in the original Greek is *apostolos*, or “sent ones.” This is an apt description of the role given to those twelve, as Jesus appointed them and immediately sent them out on short-term ministry missions. Later, after His resurrection, they would be sent to the ends of the earth.

**Key Concept:** When Jesus calls, His disciples obey to continue His mission.

**What can you do to start or continue to follow the call God has on your life?**

Notes

Jesus's calling and commission of the disciples revealed the heart of God: God wanted to involve His people in His mission. Jesus called disciples because He desired to give those whom He loved a role in the plan of salvation. That desire extended from those first twelve disciples to the church as a whole.

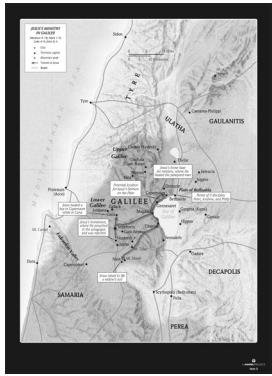
What began with the disciples continues in us today. We who have given ourselves to Christ have been commissioned and sent out to proclaim who Jesus is and what He has done. We have been given authority, and He has promised that nothing can hinder the church from doing the work of God!

**LEADER NOTE:** People may not know what is meant by the phrase "the mission of God." When we talk about the work Jesus called the disciples to do, and the work that God now calls the church to do, we are talking about God's redemptive plan throughout all of human history to deal with humanity's sin, to restore His image-bearers to a right relationship with Himself, and to fulfill His original design in creation of an earth full of and ruled by those who bear His image rightly. The church participates in that mission today through evangelism, sharing the good news of Jesus's death, resurrection, and impending return.

**How does it make you feel to be called to participate in the same mission the twelve disciples were given?**

#### THEOLOGY CONNECTION

**CALLING:** The calling of God to salvation happens in two ways: externally through the proclamation of the gospel and internally through the Holy Spirit working in the heart of the person who hears. Both of these callings are essential, and both work together to bring someone to faith in Christ (2 Tim. 1:8-10).



## ARRIVAL

**WRITE:** Pass out a piece of paper to each person as they arrive. Instruct them to write “Bucket List” at the top (refers to what you want to do before you die, before you “kick the bucket”) and to write down what they would’ve written on their Bucket List at the age of 18 years old.

**ASK:** How many things on that list were things you just wanted to do, and how many did you feel you were called to do? How do you distinguish a calling from a desire?

## CONTEXT

**SAY:** The Gospel of Mark spends the first eight chapters showing that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God. The events recorded are more concerned with that purpose than with detailing each event in the life of Jesus in chronological order. Our last session, focused on Mark 2, dealt with Jesus’s authority to forgive and heal when people place their faith in Him. Today’s passage starts with crowds of people coming to Jesus from a variety of places. *(Call attention to Pacl’ Item 2: Jesus’s Ministry in Galilee Map, and point out the locations mentioned in today’s passage: map includes the region of Galilee, the region “beyond,” or east, of the Jordan River, and the cities of Tyre and Sidon; Judea, Jerusalem, and Idumea were further south, beyond the edge of the map.)*

## RECAP

**ASK:** From your personal preparation this week, what stood out about Jesus and His actions in today’s passage? What questions might you have?

**TRANSITION:** People feel drawn to Jesus for many reasons. Sometimes it’s to get something that would benefit or bless them. But Jesus calls us simply to come to Him, to be in relationship with Him, and to be part of His family. Today we will look at some aspects of calling.



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**Key Concept:** When Jesus calls, His disciples obey to continue His mission.

Notes

### GROUP ACTIVITY

**CHART:** Direct your group to page 64 in their Personal Study Guide (PSG), where they will find the chart “Desires and Calling.” Recreate the chart on a board in your room so you can record the group’s findings as they interact with Scripture.

Desires and Calling		
Read the passages below. Write down the motives of each group of people who came to Jesus, and write down Jesus’s intentions for them.		
	MOTIVES	JESUS’S INTENTIONS
<b>THE CROWDS</b> (Mark 3:7-12)		
<b>THE DISCIPLES</b> (Mark 3:13-19)		

**READ:** Call for a volunteer to read aloud Mark 3:7-12.

**ANALYZE:** For the first box in the first row on the chart, ask: “Why did people come from so many locations and so far away? What may have been their motives to come and see Jesus?” (*Jesus’s fame had already spread; people were curious or wanted to hear Him in person; people wanted to be healed or to witness the action.*) For the second box in the first row, ask: “How did Jesus respond? What can we infer about His intentions for the crowds based on what He did?” (*Jesus got into a boat for self-preservation and to accommodate the crowds; He could have gone away, but He stayed and presumably taught, healed, and cast out demons. // Jesus had compassion for the people and wanted them to be nourished spiritually and to be made well both physically and spiritually; He wanted them to experience and become part of His kingdom.*)

**READ:** Call for a volunteer to read aloud Mark 3:13-19.

**ENGAGE:** For the second row on the chart, ask: “What might have been the disciples’ motives for obeying Jesus’s call to discipleship?” (*They believed Jesus is the Messiah; they were compelled by His presence [see Mark 2:14]; they believed Jesus was sent by God.*) Highlight Judas’s name on the list of disciples. Ask: “What do you think Judas’s motives were compared to the other disciples? What were Jesus’s intentions for these disciples?” (*He appointed them and sent them to preach and to drive out demons, extending and fulfilling Jesus’s own ministry to the ends of the earth.*)

**CLARIFY:** It is important to note that Jesus intended to equip these men to carry on His work. Their proclaiming His words was fundamental in the founding of the church in the book of Acts after Jesus’s resurrection and ascension. The apostle John recorded Jesus’s words of prayer for those who would believe in Him through the message of His apostles (John 17:20).

### DEBRIEF

**How can we know when God is calling us to do something for His glory?**

### SUMMARIZE

Throughout His ministry, Jesus showed compassion on the crowds, even though not all were wanting to believe in Him. Jesus appointed the twelve disciples to extend the reach of His compassion to even more people and to the ends of the earth. To this end, Jesus called the Twelve to be part of His life that He might teach and equip them for the gospel ministry.

### HEAD, HEART, HANDS

Walk the group through the Head, Heart, Hands section in the PSG (p. 65). If running short on time, specifically highlight the **Heart** section in this week’s study, inviting volunteers to share their responses to the question in this section.



**HEAD:** We must understand the truth and weight of God’s calling believers to participate in His mission. Jesus began His ministry by commissioning those who believed in Him to be participants, not just spectators. The same is true today—as believers in Christ, we are called to kingdom work.

**How does the calling and commissioning of the apostles challenge your idea of what it means to be a Christian?**



**HEART:** One of the great wonders of the Bible is that God includes His people in His work. The transcendent, perfect, holy God invites mortal sinners turned saints to be a part of His plans for universal history. What great mercy and grace! What a privilege! This should be a cause of great joy and wonder for us.

**Key Concept:** When Jesus calls, His disciples obey to continue His mission.

Notes

### How do you see God's love for you in His calling on your life?



**HANDS:** God's call should be a joyful thing, but it also should be sobering.

The Bible states, "From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, even more will be expected" (Luke 12:48). We are not just spectators in God's plan of redemption. Christ calls us to Himself to receive salvation and then to proclaim that very same gospel to others. Every Christian has a responsibility to join Christ in proclaiming the gospel.

### How can you participate in God's mission for an unbelieving friend, seeking an opportunity to share Christ with them?

#### NEXT STEPS

Challenge the group to consider these actions as responses to this session.

- Ask God to show you anything in your life that may be crowding out your time with Him. Pray that He will show you how to come to Him with pure motives to be in His presence.
- Proclaiming God's Word can seem very intimidating, especially when you do not know what to say. Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-8, making a list of what verses 3-4 say is "most important."
- Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what God is calling you to do to be part of His mission to see the world come to faith in Him.

Invite volunteers to share prayer needs for this week. Encourage them to record these in the space on page 65 in their PSG so they can pray for others throughout the week.

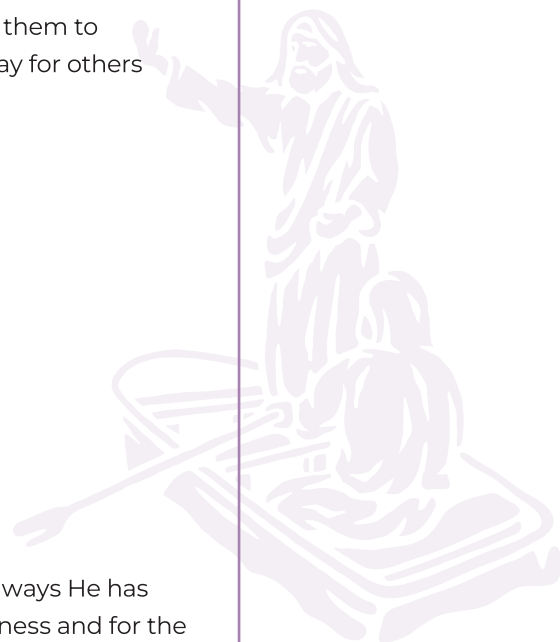
#### PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES

#### PRAYING SCRIPTURE

**CLOSE:** Pray Psalm 98:1-3 with your group, thanking God for the ways He has performed wonders, especially in Jesus. Thank God for His goodness and for the privilege of taking His gospel to the ends of the earth.

#### References

1. Rodney Reeves, "Messianic Secret," in Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, ed. Chad Brand et al. (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1116.



# THE CHOSEN DISCIPLES

By Daniel Youngblood



Many historians, Christian and non-Christian, agree that the most influential event in all human history was the life of Jesus of Nazareth and the worldwide movement that He and His followers launched. Following the teachings of their Rabbi, the Twelve launched a global mission that would rewrite the course of history.

Who were these men who turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6)? They weren't that different from many of us. Many were workers from rural regions around Judea with limited education, power, or esteem. They weren't the most knowledgeable, the most spiritual, or the most religiously convicted of the Jews. They were just normal men. We know their names not because of who they were originally but because of who they became after they encountered Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

## SPECIALLY CHOSEN . . .

The disciples weren't chosen because they were special. They were special because they were chosen. This was unique to Jesus's disciples. When a young man wanted to train to be a rabbi, he would seek out the teacher he wanted to follow and hope to earn a place among that rabbi's students. Jesus, however, didn't follow the culture's norms. He sought His students out, and He chose them. Out of the many disciples who followed Jesus, the Twelve were given the designation of "apostle," or "sent one" (Mark 3:13-14). They were specially set apart. It is important to see that the call to follow Jesus comes from Jesus Himself. He does not wait for potential disciples to come to Him. He seeks them out, and He makes the lost, the lowly, the average, and the unlikely into saints through the power of the Holy Spirit.

## BY SOMEONE SPECIAL . . .

Do you ever wonder who the Twelve believed Jesus was when they first accepted His call? They could see He was special, but who could have predicted where that call would lead? As Jesus revealed who He is and what He came to do, the Twelve slowly understood that they had been chosen by Someone even greater than they realized.

They heard Jesus claim authority to forgive sins, call Himself Lord of the Sabbath, teach that the kingdom of God had come, and call people to repent. They witnessed Jesus cleanse lepers, make lame men walk, and show His authority over death itself. They ran in fear at His arrest and crucifixion, yet they also saw Him resurrected and touched the holes in His hands and side. They felt His breath on their faces as He told them to receive the Holy Spirit and go to all the nations to proclaim His name.

After all they saw and heard, the disciples came to believe this Rabbi was no simple teacher. They were chosen by the incarnate God of the universe. The eternal Word, God the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, had set them apart to be the first ambassadors of His kingdom coming to earth.

No, there was nothing essentially special about those who were chosen, but there was something incredibly special about the One who did the choosing. The reality of Jesus's identity transformed their lives, and that transformation fueled them to go forth and transform the world itself. The same is true of all disciples of Jesus today. The God who loves us has chosen us, and through following Him, we are transformed into something greater than who we were.

Jesus didn't follow the culture's norms.  
He sought His students out, and He chose them.

### FOR A SPECIAL PURPOSE

What does it mean to be chosen? It means God calls people for a purpose and tasks them with a mission. It has always been God's way to choose people made in His image as the means by which He accomplishes His will. God chooses a few out of the many so that through the few His blessings can be multiplied and spread to the many as well. He created Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply, filling the earth with His image and ruling His world for His glory, but they sinned, and humanity fell from our first mission. He chose the family of Abraham, the twelve tribes of Israel, to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. His promise was that through this chosen nation, He would bless all the nations of the earth. But Israel broke the covenant and failed in their mission as well.

Jesus Christ came as the fulfillment of Adam's mission and Israel's mission. He is the ultimate Chosen One of God, and as He came to save people from all nations, tribes, and tongues, He calls His followers to come join His mission. Jesus chose the Twelve and sent them out to share the good news of His salvation with all nations. He has chosen us and sent us out to preach the good news in the very same way.

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