

## Day 1

Today is day one of Serve309. Over the course of the next three days, you will spend hours and hours serving our community through projects like landscaping, painting, cleaning, washing cars and sharing God's Word. What you are doing is important and means a lot to the people you are serving. Thank you for be willing to serve and bless others in our community!

In our evening sessions, we will be hearing messages from the book of Daniel in the Old Testament but our morning devotions are coming from the New Testament book of Mark.

In the opening verse of Mark 1, he states what he's writing and who he is writing about.

### **Read Mark 1:1**

The word gospel means good news. Who doesn't want to hear good news? And who doesn't want to share good news when you have some to share? Mark is writing the good news about Jesus Christ. Be honest...did you think Christ is Jesus' last name? I remember when I thought that. However, Christ is the greek word for Messiah.

All throughout the Old Testament we are promised a Messiah and we learn in the New Testament, this Messiah is Jesus. The words Messiah and Christ mean "anointed one." Jesus is also a greek translation of the name Joshua which means "the Lord saves." Mark also declares Jesus as the Son of God. This means Jesus is more than just another man - he is fully divine. All of this meaning Jesus is the anointed one of God sent to save people from their sins. That is good news!

In your groups, have a couple of volunteers tell of the time they heard this good news or gospel of Jesus and how it has changed their lives. We often refer to this as "when I was saved."

Day 2

### **Read Mark 1:1-8**

Yesterday, we read verse one and learned that Jesus is the Son of God who was sent to save people from their sins. Today, we're reading about Jesus' cousin who was sharing the good news with people in the wilderness.

John the Baptist is the messenger who was sent to prepare the way for the Messiah. This was foretold thousands of years before in the Old Testament book of Isaiah. John was baptizing people in the wilderness when they confessed and repented of their sins. The word repent means "to turn." As people confessed of their sins, John urged people to turn away from their sins.

Do you know what sin is? Sin is rebellion against God and we are all guilty of sinning in some way. The book of Romans teaches this in Romans 3:23. In fact, we're born with a sin nature. It's a generational curse we all have inherited from Adam and Eve. Not only do we all inherit this curse but the Bible says in Romans 6:23 that we deserve death because of it - "For the wages of sin is death." And while this is all bad news...I have good news for you!

The second half of Romans 6:23 says, "but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Salvation is a free gift! God gives you this gift free of charge all because he loves you. God loves you so much that he sent Jesus, who never sinned, to die on the cross for your sins and the Bible says if you believe that you receive this gift of eternal life and forgiveness of sins.

Do you believe in this good news? Have you trusted Christ for salvation? Have you repented or turned from your sins? What's stopping you from confessing sin?

1 John 1:9 says "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Use Psalm 51:1-10 in your group time as a guide to confess and repent of your sins.

For additional scripture read 1 John 1.

Day 3

After Jesus began his ministry and started preaching in Galilee he started to invite people to come alongside him.

### **Read Mark 1:16-20**

How soon did they begin to follow Jesus?

Immediately. The word immediately appears 59 times in the New Testament and 41 of those are in the gospel of Mark. He is writing with urgency. The decision to follow Jesus is an urgent one to make. The world we live in is full of evil and uncertainty yet with Jesus he is always faithful to be good and is always looking out for your best interest (Romans 8:28).

Jesus gives this same invitation to you and I..."Follow Me." To follow Jesus means to be his disciple or student. We learn from him and as we learn from him we become more like him. The process of being made more like Jesus is called sanctification. It's a lifelong process that begins when we put our faith in Jesus.

Examine your life. Are you currently in this process of becoming more like Jesus or are you following culture and the desires of your flesh? Following Jesus involves sacrifices because you may lose friends, your thoughts and desires will change, and if you're like me your whole world will be turned upside down. But it's a sacrifice worth making!

Are you ready to commit to following Jesus?

As a disciple of Jesus, we're called to share this good news of Jesus all over the world. We're called to be disciples who make disciples.  
(Matthew 18:18-20)

In your groups, talk about your commitment to follow Jesus. Let your group leader know if you're ready to take this step. Then, take time to share names of people who need to hear this good news and spend time praying for them.

## Additional Discussion Questions and Scripture

- ❖ Matthew 5:1-16
- ❖ Psalm 119:1-16
- ❖ Galatians 5:19-25
- ❖ Luke 24
- ❖ Colossians 1:15-23
  
- ❖ What is something the passage reveals about God?
  
- ❖ What is something in the passage you like?
  
- ❖ Is there anything in this passage that you find hard to understand?
  
- ❖ What is something I can change in my life as a result of this passage?
  
- ❖ Who is someone I could share this passage with?