

 **Bible Study Lesson: The Call to Follow Jesus – 01/08/2026** **Focus Scripture (NIV – Mark 1:14–20)****Jesus Announces the Good News**

¹⁴After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵“The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

¹⁶As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ¹⁸At once they left their nets and followed him.

¹⁹When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. ²⁰Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

 **Lesson Objectives**

- Understand Jesus’ proclamation of the kingdom of God and the call to repentance.
- Reflect on the immediate response of the first disciples to Jesus’ invitation.
- Explore what it means to be “fishers of people” in today’s context.
- Prepare hearts for the Sunday School lesson on Luke 15:11–24 (the Prodigal Son) by connecting repentance and following Christ with God’s welcoming love.

 **Verse Breakdown and Insights**

- Verses 14–15: Jesus begins His ministry with urgency—God’s kingdom is near, requiring repentance and faith.
- Verses 16–17: Jesus calls ordinary fishermen, showing that discipleship is for all. His invitation transforms their purpose.
- Verse 18: Simon and Andrew respond immediately, leaving behind their livelihood to follow Jesus.
- Verses 19–20: James and John also respond without delay, leaving family and work. Following Jesus requires commitment and trust.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Jesus begin His ministry with the call to repent and believe?
2. What does “fishers of people” mean in practical terms today?
3. Why do you think Simon, Andrew, James, and John responded immediately?
4. What might Jesus be asking us to leave behind in order to follow Him more fully?
5. How does this passage challenge us to live with urgency for God’s kingdom?

Memory Verse

Mark 1:17 (NIV): ¹⁷“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”

Why This Lesson Prepares Us for Luke 15:11–24

- Mark 1:14–20 emphasizes repentance and following Jesus.
- Luke 15:11–24 (Prodigal Son) shows God’s joy when sinners repent and return to Him.
- Together, these passages highlight both sides of discipleship: our call to repent and follow, and God’s loving welcome when we do.
- This makes Mark 1:14–20 a powerful devotional preparation—it sets the stage for understanding the Father’s heart in Luke 15.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for calling us to follow You. Help us to repent, believe the good news, and live as fishers of people. Give us courage to leave behind anything that hinders us from fully obeying You. As we prepare for the lesson of the Prodigal Son, remind us of Your love and the joy of returning to the Father. In Your name we pray, Amen.

Bible Study Worksheet: Mark 1:14–20 (NIV)

Focus Scripture

“After John was put in _____, Jesus went into _____, proclaiming the good news of God.” (v.14)

“The time has come,” he said. ‘The _____ of God has come near. _____ and believe the good news!’” (v.15)

Lesson Objectives

1. Understand Jesus’ proclamation of the _____ of God and the call to _____.
2. Reflect on the immediate _____ of the first disciples.
3. Explore what it means to be “fishers of _____.”

Verse Breakdown

- Verses 14–15: Jesus begins His ministry with urgency—God’s _____ is near.
- Verses 16–17: Jesus calls ordinary _____, showing discipleship is for all.
- Verse 18: Simon and Andrew respond _____, leaving behind their livelihood.
- Verses 19–20: James and John also respond without _____, leaving family and work.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Jesus begin His ministry with the call to _____ and believe?
2. What does “fishers of _____” mean in practical terms today?
3. Why do you think the disciples responded _____?

Memory Verse

Fill in the blanks:

“Come, _____ me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to _____ for people.” (Mark 1:17)

Connection to Luke 15

- Mark 1:14–20: Emphasizes _____ and following Jesus.
- Luke 15:11–24: Shows God’s joy when sinners _____ and return to Him.
- Together: Highlight both our call to follow and God’s _____ welcome.