



WINTER CHURCHWIDE STUDY

SEEKING THE KING

Brian Coles
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WORSHIP

Begin your group with a time of worship. If someone in your group can lead worship, invite them to lead two or three songs. Alternatively, consider using one or more of these songs from our Sunday morning worship time:

- **Faithful And True** (*New Life Worship*)
- **No One Like The Lord/Is He Worthy** (*Jesus Culture*)
- **All Hail King Jesus** (*Bethel Music*)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Mark 1 & 2
- Acts 17:31
- Hebrews 1:1-2

OPENING PRAYER

Begin by asking God to open hearts and minds to His presence and revelation during your time together.

Ice Breaker (5-10 min)

When you hear the phrase "the kingdom of God," what's the first thing that comes to mind? What do you hope to experience in God's kingdom?

SERMON RECAP (5 minutes)

This week we began a new series in the Gospel of Mark, focusing on how Jesus inaugurated God's kingdom on earth. Pastor Brian highlighted four testimonies about Jesus (Mark's, John the Baptist's, the Father's, and Jesus's own) and explored how King Jesus:

1. Calls disciples into ministry
2. Rules over darkness
3. Lives as a pattern to follow
4. Invites anyone willing to eat at His table

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (35-40 min)

Section 1: The Kingdom Has Come Near

Read Mark 1:14-15

1. Jesus proclaimed, "The time has come. The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" What does it mean that the kingdom has "come near" in Jesus?
2. Pastor Brian explained that "repent" means more than just feeling sorry for sin—it's a complete turning of your life toward God. What area of your life is God calling you to turn toward Him right now?
3. The Greek word for "believe" (pisteuo) speaks of a relationship of trust and dependence, not just mental agreement. How would you describe the difference between believing **about** Jesus and believing **in** Jesus?

Section 2: Jesus Calls His Disciples

Read Mark 1:16-20

4. Peter, Andrew, James, and John left their nets and their livelihoods immediately to follow Jesus. What do you think enabled them to respond so quickly? What "nets" might Jesus be asking you to leave behind?
5. Pastor Brian mentioned that "Jesus calls who He chooses" and warned against jealousy or judgment. Have you ever struggled with comparing your calling to someone else's? How can we celebrate the different ways Jesus calls people?

Section 3: Jesus Rules Over Darkness

Read Mark 1:32-34

6. Jesus healed many who had various diseases and drove out many demons. The whole town gathered at the door. What does this tell us about Jesus's authority and power?
7. How have you personally experienced Jesus's power over darkness, sickness, or spiritual oppression in your life or in the lives of others?

Section 4: Jesus's Pattern of Life

Read Mark 1:35-39

8. Even in the midst of incredible ministry success, Jesus withdrew to a solitary place to pray. Why do you think Jesus prioritized this private time with the Father? What was He modeling for us?
9. Pastor Brian emphasized that "all of what God is doing must be rooted in our private quiet time with the Lord." How would you honestly assess your current prayer life? What practical adjustments could you make this week?
10. When the disciples found Jesus praying and said "Everyone is looking for you," Jesus responded by saying they needed to go to other villages. What does this teach us about staying focused on God's mission rather than popularity or success?

Section 5: Jesus Eats with Sinners

Read Mark 2:15-17

11. The religious leaders criticized Jesus for eating with tax collectors and sinners. Why was this so scandalous? Why did Jesus do it anyway?
12. Jesus said, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." How does this statement challenge our understanding of who belongs at Jesus's table? Who in your life needs to know they're invited?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION (10 Mins)

This Week's Challenge: SEEK

Choose at least one of the following to practice this week:

1. SEEK in Prayer

- Commit to a daily time of solitary prayer, following Jesus's pattern
- Set your alarm 15-30 minutes earlier to pray before your day begins
- Consider participating in the church's continued call to prayer and fasting

2. SEEK in Repentance

- Identify one area where you need to "turn toward God" and make a concrete change
- Share this with a trusted friend or accountability partner

3. SEEK the Lost

- Identify one "tax collector or sinner" in your life who needs to know they're invited to Jesus's table
- Invite them to coffee, a meal, or simply into conversation this week

4. SEEK Through Scripture

- Read through the entire Gospel of Mark this week (it only takes about 90 minutes)
- Journal about what you discover about who Jesus is

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Have each person share one key takeaway from the discussion. Consider:

- What stood out most to you from this passage or conversation?
- What is one thing God is speaking to you about?

CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer Prompts:

- Pray for hearts that truly repent and believe
- Pray for boldness to follow Jesus immediately, leaving behind whatever holds us back
- Pray for consistent, intimate prayer lives
- Pray for the lost people in our lives who need to encounter King Jesus
- Pray for our church as we SEEK God's presence together

Share specific prayer requests and pray for one another.