

We are going to start by reading this week's Scripture from the book of Mark (Mark 1:14-20).

When you read verse 15, think to yourself about what Jesus is saying. The Roman Empire currently has total control of the land, and they would call themselves the Kingdom of the gods. So when Jesus says, '...the kingdom of God is near...' what is he saying?

If you remember, Herod was afraid because of something the magi said to him about Jesus as well. Something about Jesus' message totally subverted the power structures that had been put in place by the kingdoms of this world.

But what is the Kingdom of God?

Jesus will spend some time describing it using parables later on in his ministry. But when you think about the Kingdom of God, what comes to mind?

It is not a coincidence that the story that immediately follows is him calling his first disciples. What role in society did the first four disciples occupy? Where do you think they stacked up in the social hierarchy?

Fishermen were probably towards the bottom of the social order. But what happens to that social structure when Jesus picks them first?

What does this say then about the Kingdom of God?

When you hear about the kingdom of God, does it seem real to you? Or does it perhaps seem like something distant and far off?

When Paul talks about the Kingdom of God, he talks about something that is already here but also not complete yet. In some ways the Kingdom of God is already here through Jesus and is not yet fulfilled as we await the fullness of this kingdom. So, in some ways, we have to continue the work that Jesus started as he begins his ministry in Mark, the work of being like the Kingdom of God in the midst of times with priorities that do not line up.

Spend some time today thinking about how the Kingdom of God would treat and react towards those that we consider on the bottom of the social ladder.