

The Beginning

1 This is the Good News about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God... 14 Later on, after John was arrested, Jesus went into Galilee, where he preached God's Good News. 15 "The time promised by God has come at last!" he announced. "The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!"
Mark 1:1, 14-15 (NLT)

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- Think of important people, events and places in your spiritual development. How have they shaped you?
- What kind of books do you enjoy reading? Do you like to read a book that starts off slow and easy or jumps right in?
- O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

Mark's Gospel

- O: Very first words a person says often give us a clue as to what he/she will be talking about. What are Mark's first words (1:1)? What do they tell us about his Gospel?
- O: What are the first words of Jesus (1:15)? What is the main theme of His preaching?
- I: How would you describe the way Mark starts off his Gospel story: shocking? Grabbing? Intriguing? Boring?
- I: Discuss the importance of the terms/titles "Good News/Gospel," "Messiah/Christ," "Son of God," "Son of Man" (2:10, 8:31, 9:9), "Repent," and "Kingdom of God."
- A: If you wrote the "Gospel according to you," how would you begin it, what would you include, why?
- A: What do you hope to get out of this journey through the Gospel of Mark?

Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray for open hearts and minds to the Gospel of Mark. Pray that we as a church body would be able to come together and be open to God's Word, without preconceived notions or agendas or blinders based on past experiences.
- **Respond:** Reading through the Gospel Mark takes about 1.5 hours. Take some time this week and try to read through the entire Gospel of Mark. Write down passages that jump out, note what you think some key themes are in the book, and pray that you would be open to discovering/rediscovering who Jesus is and what His message and life could mean for you and our church.
- **Read:** Next week's sermon (5/30/2010) will focus on Mark 1:2-13. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, etc.

* As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid "go through this guide word-for-word." These guides rely heavily on a few different study guides; including "LifeChange Series" (ISBN 0891099107), N.T. Wright's guide (ISBN 9780830821822), James Hoover's guide (ISBN 9780830830046), and the Serendipity NT for Groups by the Young Life ministry (ISBN is N/A)