



This guide is an invitation to follow Jesus with greater purpose and hope. It will help you to explore the scriptures and challenge you to live out your faith. Each week we'd love for you to think about how you relate: **Up** (with God), **In** (with church) and **Out** (with neighbors).

Weekly Questions:

- How is God getting my attention? For help, think about these areas:
- How are you living up with God?
- How are you living in community with other followers of Jesus?
- How are you living out on mission with your neighbors?
- What are you going to do about it?

Devalued: Inhospitable

Read Mark 1

- Mark's Gospel begins with "The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God." What is the significance of this opening statement, and what does it reveal about the core message of Mark's gospel?
- John the Baptist's role is to "prepare the way for the Lord." How does John's ministry, characterized by a voice "calling in the wilderness," challenge our modern notions of what it means to prepare for something significant? What does it say that after 400 years of quiet, the kingdom of God starts from the wilderness and with the sick, worn out, outcasts, and possessed?
- What does the rule and reign of Jesus, the kingdom of God, look like on earth as in heaven? How does Jesus disrupt or break the religious rules to heal people? Can you describe a time when God has worked in a way you didn't expect?
- Who does Jesus serve and heal in the first chapter of Mark? Are people at the margins and people at the center both included? What does this teach us about the kingdom of God? About Jesus?
- In Mark 1:40-45 Jesus touches a man with leprosy and heals him. What does it say about who Jesus is that he would touch a man who is religiously unclean? What does it mean about our religious traditions, i.e. what is their purpose?
- What does this story tell us about who Jesus is? What does it show us that the kingdom of God is like?

This week, what is one way you can look for Jesus to work in someone's life that you may not normally expect? This week, what is one area of your life that you can trust to Jesus that you have wanted to hide or avoid? This week, how can you be thankful for how Jesus loves and includes you?