

**Encounter | Week 1 - The Meaning of Life****Big Idea**

Jesus calls ordinary people to join him and experience extraordinary things.

**Scripture**

Mark 1:1, Mark 1:16-20, and Philippians 3:7-8

**Points to Keep In Mind**

1. John Mark wrote the Book of Mark. He was an early believer in the early church and accompanied Paul on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:13). Most theologians consider Mark the first Gospel written, so it precedes the other Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John and was written between A.D. 55 and 59. Some highlights of Mark include more miracles recorded than any other Gospel, and the other Gospels quote all but 31 verses of Mark. The purpose and theme of Mark is to point to Jesus being God's Son.
2. The very first verse of Mark (1:1) tells us his big idea for writing this book. The book is meant to be a "beginning" or "introduction" to Jesus. If you wanted to take a college course on the life of Jesus, Mark would be "The Life of Jesus 101." For any follower of Jesus, reading and knowing Mark should be a mandatory class. But Mark is not just an introduction to something that happened in history; it is an introduction to an ongoing story we are a part of. As we read the Gospel of Mark, we will discover that the good news of Jesus not only happened, but it is happening! The story isn't over. We are in a continuing story of good news. The Gospel of Mark just tells the beginning. We are to find ourselves in the story and carry it forward.
3. Jesus calls four disciples in Mark 1:16-20 to follow him, and they do not hesitate. They respond with obedience to Jesus' invitation. Saying yes to Jesus didn't require them to know everything about him. Over their three years together, Jesus taught and walked with them, and their choice to follow him changed their lives for all eternity. But initially, each disciple had to decide whether they would start walking. Their journey was an active process, not a passive one. The same is true for us. Here at COMMUNITY, we've gone out of our way to create safe spaces where you can process all your questions and doubts. Our hope is that this is a place where you find your way back to God and continue the discipleship journey to follow Jesus every day into eternity.
4. In Philippians 3:7-8, Paul says that Christ-followers must count all worldly greatness as nothing because Christ is infinitely better than anything the world offers.

**Additional Questions and Resources**

*visit [communitychristian.org/nextsteps](http://communitychristian.org/nextsteps)*

1. Where do you see God at work in your life right now?
2. What next steps do you feel called to take in your faith journey?
3. Have you considered getting baptized? [communitychristian.org/baptism](http://communitychristian.org/baptism)
4. What have you been learning from the Community Daily? [communitychristian.org/daily](http://communitychristian.org/daily)
5. Find out more about having a YOU+ Discipleship Conversation by visiting: [youplus.info](http://youplus.info)