



THE STORY

POWERED BY ZONDERVAN

THE STORY **PART 23** **"JESUS' MINISTRY BEGINS"**

Introduction: We have no biblical record of Jesus' life from age 12 to age 30ish (the formal beginning of his ministry). But the beginning of his ministry is *dramatic*! He first demonstrated his supernatural ability at a wedding party. Later he demonstrated supernatural knowledge and authority to forgive sins. Here's how he described his ministry: "The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor." The nature of Jesus' ministry signified what the coming kingdom of God is like—where people are made whole, where no one is excluded, and where not even death can stamp out life. Jesus' ministry was the beginning of a new normal!

Text: *The Story:* Ch 23; **Bible:** Matthew 3-4, 11; Mark 1-3; Luke 8; John 1-4

Main Idea: The kingdom of God is the "new normal" (Mark 1:15)

Discussion Questions:

1. Jesus often withdrew to a solitary place to talk with God. Describe what would be the ideal solitary place—imagined or real—to which you could retreat and talk with God.
2. What kind of people did Jesus typically reach out to? What kind of people did he oppose? Why? How does that challenge you?*
3. Jesus often healed people by touching them. What is an area of your life where God has "touched" and brought about healing?
4. When Jesus calls his disciples and says, "Follow me" (Mk 1:16-19, Jn 1:43-46)—what was he inviting them to do? How have you responded to that same invitation? What does "following" Jesus look like everyday?
5. Jesus stated, "Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." What do you think this statement means?*
6. What is the relationship between God working in your life and your "following" Him?

Pray as a Group:

1. Ask God to bring his kingdom even more into your life (i.e. greater wholeness, freedom from darkness, peace, and joy by belonging to him).

* Max Lucado and Randy Frazee, "Discussion Questions" in *The Story* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2011), 483.