**WOODLANDS CHURCH**

**September 24th 2017. The Apprentice**

**Discussion notes: The Apprentice. Mark 1:14-20**

Discipleship is arguably the main purpose of the Church, to grow disciples and make new ones (sounds a bit like ‘reproducing the life of Jesus’?). Yet most Churches would confess to a rather lukewarm discipleship in reality in the culture and practice of their Church. Our new preaching series on discipleship uses a less religious word ‘Apprentice’ to remind us that discipleship is not just a cerebral or intellectual thing. Rather it is immensely practical, no less than an imitation of Jesus Himself! Mark’s gospel will be our text, but I hope there will be plenty of homework.

1. In discipleship, what is the tension between the responsibility of the ‘follower’ and the one who is the disciple ‘maker’? (Mark 1:17).
2. Do you consider yourself a follower of Jesus? If so who is ‘making’ you a disciple? Is this just a hidden work of the Holy Spirit or are there humans involved, and if so, how?
3. What is the place of baptism in the step of becoming an ‘apprentice’ of Jesus?
4. Why do the gospel stories spend as much time on the things that Jesus *did* in his ministry, rather than majoring on the theology of the incarnation (not strongly visible in Mark) and the Cross?
5. Can you list the ways in which you think you could or should try and imitate Jesus? How much of Jesus actions are unique to him, and how much should we try and copy (with His help)?

This week think about what it means to imitate Jesus. For example, Jesus started his ministry by being baptised and instructed his disciples to baptise future followers of Jesus (Matthew 28:19). If you haven’t been baptised, why not?