

Resource Page for Mark 1:16-39

Most ministry happens within the home and has generational impact.

Inception points are experiences or interventions which change the direction of our lives. They can include a direct experience with God.

What does our faith have to do with others?

To learn more...

Capernaum was a large religious hub, major Galilean fishing village and busy trading center. Scholars believe there could have been up to 4 million people who claimed the Galilee region as their place of residence. The influx of Diaspora Jews and foreign Gentiles was a result of the Pax Romana and the exemplary Roman roads which made travel safe and secure. The Jews who had been exiled (587 BC) returned from all over the world. The Gentiles were purveyors of commerce. The Decapolis (ten cities) was located in the Eastern region and there were ten Jewish cities in the Western region. This included the grand city of Tiberias named after the Roman Emperor and home to the more progressive Hellenistic Jews. The synagogue there is smaller but significant.

The more conservative Capernaum synagogue was the largest of its kind and was home to significant rabbis and teachers of the first century such as Rabbi Akiva. Rabbis and teachers travelled from all over the world to teach, debate and learn at the Capernaum synagogue. Rabbinical Judaism did not take full effect until after the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem (70 AD). The question of Jewish authority (local synagogue vs Temple) was a serious topic in first century Judaism which threatened to undermine leadership, control and taxation of the People of Israel.

Galilee is of special interest to Christians because 37 of Jesus' miracles happened there that included a radical ministry to *both* Jew and Gentile including feeding of thousands of people, casting out of demons, changing water into wine, healing, displays of Jesus' authority over Creation, miraculous catches of fish, and raising people from the dead! Peter, Andrew, James and John lived there.

2½ miles from the Jordan River, Capernaum is located on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee (modern Lake Kinneret, which the Bible also called the lake of Gennesaret, Sea of Chinnereth and the Sea of Tiberias). The ancient city of Capernaum is called Kefar Nahum (Hebrew—town or village of comfort) and Talhum (Arabic).