



THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW WEEK 3: MATTHEW 4:12-25

Community Group Study Guide - Week of January 17

This week we looked at Matthew 4:12-25, a text where Jesus calls his first disciples. Upon encountering Christ, Peter, Andrew, James, and John were astonished at Christ's miraculous display of authority (see Luke 5:1-11 for details in the parallel passage). What is equally astonishing is their response. Peter falls on his face in repentance and calls Jesus "Lord!" The three men then immediately leave the valuable catch of fish, their boats, their nets, their entire livelihood behind to follow Jesus.

We tend to approach God hoping that if we honor him he will return the favor by giving us success or helping us fulfill our dreams. This, however, is a very flawed and religious view of God. We can't tack God onto our lives as a good luck charm to help us with our plans. Of course, God has the power to give us success, but in this passage Jesus teaches us that our plans and dreams apart from God are broken and flawed. The problem is not that our dreams are too big, but that they are far too small. Peter wanted to lead a quiet life of catching fish with his friends, but Jesus called them to a lifetime of catching men for God, and in doing so, impacting souls for eternity.

As we read this text, we should ask ourselves if we're willing to obey God, and follow Jesus, even when He calls us to do things that are hard, nonsensical, or unexpected. Are we willing truly to lay down our personal dreams and the desires we have for ourselves? This doesn't mean that we all quit our job like the disciples, and work for a church. It does, however, mean walking in repentance and humbly seeking God's will for our lives, knowing that it will always be better than our own. Like Peter, the ability to do this is not something we muster up from within ourselves. Our obedience comes as a response to knowing and experiencing the faithfulness and power of Jesus in our lives.

In this story, Peter, Andrew, James and John experienced Jesus' power and care in a very personal way that changed their lives. This miraculous fishing trip, however, was only a shadow of the true power and love that Christ would display for us all by going to the cross and rising from the dead. The good news of Jesus' death and resurrection is tangible proof that we have a God who is so good that He loves us sacrificially, and so powerful that even death can't stop His plans. If this is who God is, then we can trust that no matter what trials this life brings, God is ultimately working everything together for our greatest good. His plans for us may not always be safe, comfortable, or easy, but they will always be good and eternally rewarding.

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

To know that a truly Christian life has basic marks: repentance, a desire to make disciples, faithfulness to the Lord's word, and service to others.

Heart

To trust that Jesus has a plan and purpose for us that is better than the plans and dreams we have for ourselves

Hands

To grow in obedience toward God, even when He calls us to do hard things.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In-Person Worship Services

THIS Sunday, January 24 at 9:30AM and 11:30AM.

Please go to <https://brookline.mosaicboston.com/serve> to sign up to serve on the Mini Mo or Usher Team.

A Membership 101 session will be held **this Sunday, January 24, at 1:15PM.** Please email admin@mosaicboston.com if interested in attending.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Matthew 4:12-25

1. **Read verse 12.** What event caused Jesus to go to Galilee? Why was John arrested? **Read verse 16.** How does Jesus bring light to Galilee?
2. What was the gospel message that Jesus shared in Galilee? How does it relate to the gospel message of John the Baptist, the disciples, and the apostle Paul? How would this message have been a source hope to the people of Galilee?
3. How is preaching the Gospel a more effective means to get to the heart of man's problems than any political, social, philosophical or economic approach? When we preach the gospel, what shall we pursue primarily, faithfulness to God or the good of man?
4. What are some misunderstandings of repentance in our day? What does it mean to truly repent? What must be the heart posture of a person who is truly repentant before God? What does the fruit of repentance look like in your life?
5. Thinking about the role of repentance in your life, does your life look any different than it did one year ago? If so, how? How have your interests, goals, and/or desires in life changed?
6. What did Peter, Andrew, James, and John leave behind to follow Christ? Has Jesus ever called you to give up something valuable to you? How did you find the strength to walk away from it?
7. How long did it take the disciples to leave to follow Jesus? Would you drop everything, give up income, leave your family for months, and/or leave a company behind to follow Jesus? What reason do Christians have to follow Jesus in such a fashion?
8. Are there places where God has asked you to change course? Are there places where you're struggling with that right now?
9. Why did Jesus Christ pair his preaching of the word with the healing of the sicknesses and wounds of his followers? What greater miracle shall we be inclined to think about when meditating upon the miracles that Christ performed to heal physical sicknesses?
10. What part of Christ's life would have been more shocking than the miracles that he performed? How does the death and resurrection of Jesus help us when the trials and sufferings of life (in service to him) cause us to doubt God's love or His power to deliver us? What would you think if a Christian told you that they consider it an honor to suffer for the Kingdom of God?
11. Why is it significant that when John the Baptist, Christ and the apostles shared the gospel they announced the arrival of the Kingdom of God/Heaven? What is the Kingdom of God? What hope does being a part of the Kingdom of God through Christ bring a person in our day?