

Faith of a Father, Matthew 4:12-22, Pastor Josh Hale | Small Group Guide & 5-Day Devo

Opening Prayer

Key Takeaways:

1. Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecy by beginning his ministry in Galilee.
2. Jesus' message was direct: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
3. Jesus calls ordinary people (fishermen) to be his disciples.
4. The importance of immediate obedience to Jesus' call.
5. Zebedee as an example of godly fatherhood.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think Jesus chose to begin his ministry in Galilee? What does this tell us about His mission?
2. Jesus' first message was "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." How would you explain this message to someone unfamiliar with Christianity?
3. Discuss the significance of Jesus calling fishermen as his first disciples. What does this reveal about who Jesus calls to follow Him?
4. The disciples immediately left their nets to follow Jesus. What might hold us back from responding to Jesus' call with such immediacy today?
5. How does Zebedee's example challenge or encourage you in your role as a parent or mentor?
6. The sermon mentions that "the greatest joy a parent can experience is to witness their children faithfully following Jesus." Do you agree? Why or why not?
7. How can we balance our responsibilities to our families with our calling to follow Jesus?

Practical Applications:

1. For Parents: Reflect on how you can disciple your children this week. Plan a specific activity or conversation to help them grow in their faith.
2. For Everyone: Identify one area in your life where you need to "immediately" follow Jesus' leading. What steps can you take this week to obey?
3. Evaluate your priorities. Are there any areas where worldly expectations are conflicting with your calling to follow Jesus? How can you realign your focus?
4. Practice sharing your faith. Role-play explaining Jesus' message of repentance and the kingdom of heaven to a friend or family member.
5. If you're not a parent, consider how you can support and encourage the parents in your church community this week.

Closing Prayer:

Thank God for His calling on our lives. Ask for wisdom and courage to follow Jesus wholeheartedly, and for grace to lead our families and communities closer to Him.

5-Day Devo

Day 1: The Light in the Darkness

Reading: Matthew 4:12-17, John 1:1-5

Devotional: Jesus, the Light of the World, entered into the darkness of our fallen world to bring hope and salvation. Just as He settled in Galilee, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy, Christ desires to dwell in the darkest corners of our lives. Reflect on areas where you need His light to shine.

How can you allow Jesus to illuminate your path and dispel the shadows in your life?

Remember, no matter how deep the darkness, His light cannot be overcome. Today, invite Christ to be your guiding light in all you do.

Day 2: The Call to Follow

Reading: Matthew 4:18-22, Luke 5:1-11

Devotional: When Jesus called His first disciples, they responded immediately, leaving everything behind. This radical obedience challenges us to examine our own response to Christ's call. What "nets" are you holding onto that might be hindering your full devotion to Jesus? Consider the areas of your life where you struggle to fully surrender to God's will. Pray for the courage to say "yes" to Jesus without hesitation, trusting that His plans for you are greater than anything you could imagine for yourself.

Day 3: Fathers and Faith

Reading: Psalm 127:3-5, Ephesians 6:1-4

Devotional: Zebedee's willingness to let his sons follow Jesus speaks volumes about his faith and understanding of God's calling. For parents, this serves as a powerful reminder that our children ultimately belong to God. How can you cultivate a heart that sees your children (or future children) as blessings from the Lord? If you're not a parent, consider how you can support and encourage the families in your community. Pray for the wisdom to guide those in your care towards a deeper relationship with Christ, even when it means letting go.

Day 4: Repentance and the Kingdom

Reading: Matthew 4:17, Acts 3:19-20

Devotional: Jesus began His ministry with a call to repentance, emphasizing the urgency of turning from sin and towards God. This message remains crucial for us today. Take time to examine your heart. Are there areas of your life that need repentance? Remember, God's Kingdom is at hand – His rule and reign are available to us now. How might your life look different if you fully embraced this reality? Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any attitudes or actions that are not aligned with God's will, and commit to living as a citizen of His Kingdom today.

Day 5: Fishers of Men

Reading: Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Timothy 2:1-2

Devotional: Jesus promised to make His disciples "fishers of men," extending His mission to all believers. This calling isn't reserved for pastors or missionaries – it's for every follower of Christ. How are you participating in this great commission? Reflect on the unique gifts and

opportunities God has given you to share His love with others. Who in your life needs to hear about Jesus? Pray for boldness to share your faith and for discernment to recognize divine appointments. Remember, as you step out in faith to "fish for men," Jesus is with you always, empowering you for the task.