MATTHEW 4:12 – 24

12 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

15 "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—
16 the people dwelling in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death,
on them a light has dawned."

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 18 While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James

the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. 23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them. 25 And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016.
Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

EXPLORING THE PASSAGE

- Matthew quotes Isaiah 9:1–2 so that his original readers (predominantly Jewish Christians[2]) would recognize the connection between Isaiah's prophecy and the work of Jesus. Read Isaiah 9:1–7. What is the message of this passage, and how does it connect to the work of Jesus?
- Jesus proclaims that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Why is this good news?
- What are the immediate effects of God's kingdom coming in this passage?
- Jesus calls people to repent because the kingdom of heaven is at hand. What is repentance? What about the coming of God's kingdom should lead people to repent?

- The theme of following is central in this passage. What do you notice about those who followed Jesus? What might have compelled them to follow Him?
- When did you decide to follow Jesus? What about Jesus and His kingdom drew you to follow Him? What immediate changes did that bring in your life?
- Summarize the main point of this passage in one or two sentences. What is God's personal word for you from this text, and how will you respond?