



## The Gospel According To MATTHEW

### Chapter 4:12-25

**“Follow Me, and I Will Make You Fishers of Men!”**

#### **> THREE INSIGHTS ON “FOLLOWING” AND “FISHING”:**

##### **> INSIGHT #1 - (v12-17) COME TO THE LIGHT OF CHRIST!**

**(v12) John the Baptist** was thrown into prison because he preached repentance and the righteous judgment of God! He even called for Herod Antipas, the Roman ruler of the region to repent and turn to God, for Herod had taken his half-brother Philip’s wife, Herodias, as his own. This was adultery and John the Baptist feared no man. John spoke the truth so that all would be warned and saved!

Later John was thrown into prison and beheaded at a banquet where Herodias’ daughter danced seductively for the king and the people. His head was placed on a platter and unveiled to the audience.

**(v13-16) God spoke through the prophet Isaiah** some 700 hundred years before Christ should appear and told us that the Messiah would dwell in the regions of *Zebulun and Naphtali* and **“the people who sat in darkness would see a great light.”**

- There have always been two lights that man’s sinful nature has tried to extinguish: **(1) The light of creation (Ro. 1:18-21) and (2) the light of his conscience (Heb. 10:22), but now a greater light has appeared, the Son of God in human flesh.**

- Listen to these Scriptures:

**John 1:4-5 - *In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.***

**John 3:19-21 - *And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.***

**John 8:12 - *Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."***

**2 Cor 4:6 - *For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.***

**(v17) What is the cry of Christ?** The word “**preach**” is *kerusso* in Greek, which means to “to proclaim” or “to publish,” that is to publicly make a message known, and what is that message, *Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand*. The word “**repent**” is *Metanoeo*, which means to turn from sin to righteousness. It involves a change of opinion, of direction, of life itself. **To repent is to have a radical change of heart, of your will, and your behavior!** Get out of darkness, turn on the light of Christ, and don’t go to hell for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!

> ***INSIGHT #2 – (v13-22) - FOLLOW JESUS and GO FISHING!***

In this passage we find Peter, Andrew, James and John “called to follow” Jesus and to be “fishers of men.”

- ***What does it mean to follow Jesus?***

- (1) ***Top Priorities*** are found in chapter 8:18-23;
- (2) ***Personal relationships*** in chapter 10:37-39;
- (3) ***True prosperity*** in chapter 16:24-27.

- ***How to become a fisher of men?***

Jesus taught and trained His disciples on how to fish for men. Soul winners are made, not born. Therefore, to be an effective witness, you must be taught, trained, and motivated by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Peter and the other apostles said in Acts 5:32 – “*We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.*”

- ***When witnessing you must trust the Holy Spirit to do three things:***

(1) ***Illuminate the mind of the unbeliever!***

- All souls are in spiritual darkness - 2 Cor 4:3-5 - *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.*

(2) ***Stir the heart of the unbeliever!***

- As Peter preached Christ, the listeners were, “*cut to the heart.*” (Acts 2:37)

(3) ***Move the will of the unbeliever!***

- The prodigal returned home when he came to himself and said, “*I will arise and go to my father.*” (Lk. 15:18) As God stirs your heart to share with a family member, a friend, or a stranger PRAY that God will empower you to penetrate their darkness with the light of Christ!

- ***Let's look to Romans 10:8-15 for inspiration!***

Evangelist Porter Barrington writes, “According to the Word of God the lost cannot be saved without a witness. They must have a witness to hear; they must hear to believe; they must believe to call; and they must call to be saved. But they cannot call until they believe, and they cannot believe until they hear, and they cannot hear without a witness. ***“So then faith (saving faith) comes by hearing”***”

In verse 17, we are not born with saving faith; it comes only when we hear the gospel. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that every born-again child of God obeys the great commission to evangelize, to GO WITH THE GOSPEL!”

On the Day of Pentecost the 3,000 had to hear to believe (Acts 2:38-40); so did the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-39); and Paul had to hear to believe (Acts 9:1-18); also Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48); and the Philippian jailer had to hear to believe (Acts 16:25-40); and YOU WERE SAVED BECAUSE SOMEONE SHARED WITH YOU!

**> *INSIGHT #3 – (v23-25) IT'S ALL ABOUT JESUS, DO YOU KNOW HIM!***

**- Christ confirmed His identity as the Messiah, the Christ, the one and only Savior of the world through:**

***(1) His teaching,***

***(2) His preaching,***

***(3) and His healing.***

**- A disciple of Christ will learn, then preach and God's salvation and HE will heal people for eternity!**