



MONDAY 22 FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Matthew 4:12

Plug In...

We've just seen Jesus go through an extremely tough experience in the wilderness. Next, Jesus learns John the Baptist has been put in prison, at which, Jesus intentionally leaves his hometown Nazareth and locates in Galilee.

Chew It Over...

Look back and ask what from John the Baptist's ministry explains why Jesus took John's imprisonment as the trigger for kicking off his own ministry?

Prayer Suggestion

Be in awe of Jesus today. Jesus knew who John was (Isa. 40:3) and knew what follows next. Immediately after combating the temptations in the wilderness, Jesus intentionally steps into his greatest challenge (including temptation) – for us! (See: Matt. 26:36-40 and Isa. 52:13-14; 53:5).



TUESDAY 23 FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Matthew 4:13-16 & Isaiah 9

Plug In...

Jesus moved to the edges of Israel. Galilee's footprint was the same area as Israel's northern tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun. Matthew uses words from Isaiah to describe this area as black as night – at death's door.

Chew It Over...

Consider what we find on the Central Coast as evidence that we too live in a land assigned to death?

Prayer Suggestion

Pray for those in our region destroyed by ice; trapped by grave sicknesses; local violence and crime. Ask God to give the gift of His light that will dispel their darkness. Think of specific people, ask God to help you point them to the dawning light coming from Israel - Jesus.



WEDNESDAY 24 FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Matthew 4:17

Plug In...

Jesus preaches. Two things he says: “repent” and “the kingdom of heaven is near”.

Chew It Over...

Think about how ‘repent’ and ‘the kingdom of heaven drawing near’ are tied together? How does this message from Jesus operate as ‘light’ for people who are under the shadow of death?

Prayer Suggestion

Ask God that you will be captured by the urgency of the kingdom, to live knowing the end of this world is close. Ask God to generate further compassion within you for those currently in darkness. Compassion and urgency to drive you to pray fervently for them; that you will share the message of ‘now is the time of repentance’.



THURSDAY 25 FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Matthew 4:18-22

Plug In...

The picture painted of Galilee by Isaiah 9, makes us look deeper at these average fishermen. On the outside it looks like they're just going about a typical day's work. Matthew, however, has just explained that these average fishermen are stuck and immobilised in a world of darkness. Even the task of seeking a 'crust' is living in the world under the shadow of death.

Chew It Over...

Where do these fishermen get the power to drop everything and follow Jesus? Is there anything here that indicates what kind of wattage this light might get to? (After thinking about this, look up Matthew 28:16-20).

Prayer Suggestion

Acknowledge to God that we grope in darkness, we don't have potential to figure out where and how to follow Jesus. Thank God for His sovereign command in Jesus, His word that performs things. Praise Jesus for saying 'follow me' to us also. Praise God for the gazillion watts of power Jesus is

beaming across the globe as people from all nations come alive with the words 'follow me'.



FRIDAY 26 FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Matthew 4:23-25

Plug In...

The areas listed are the territories with the footprint of the 12 Tribes of Israel. Jesus is fixing up both spiritually and physically the people of Israel. We could say that Israel is being resurrected from a bunch of sick dying people. It is happening on the outer edges of Israel, Galilee, so people outside of Israel even see what's going on (i.e., Syria).

Chew It Over...

Should we as Christians be full of life? Even while experiencing trouble and pain, should there be something about the hope of the kingdom being near that makes us switch on? Should we expect that this has such a dynamic that others experience us as alive?

Prayer Suggestion

Think about a hard situation at work, within the family, or even at church. Ask God to switch you on by the good news so that you are a person who is visibly alive even while circumstances are seemingly dark.



WEEKEND 27-28 FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Isaiah 9:1-7 & II

Plug In...

The great expectation of the Old Testament is that God will provide a king from David – the Messiah. Matthew's quote from Isaiah 9 is one of the places that starts to paint this expected Messiah in a very high manner. With extra time this weekend, get across some of the places from the Old Testament where the Messiah seems to be not merely a human, but God Himself. God has always promised His very self.

Select a few, or if time permits read them all: Psalms 2, 45, 72, 89, 110.

Chew It Over...

Consider the throne names announced for the Davidic king in Isaiah 9:5-6. From Isaiah 11:1-5, think about what is necessary for this Davidic king to reach and achieve the highest ideals of the kingdom.

Prayer Suggestion

Pray today using the words and concepts of Isaiah 12 song of praise.