

Followers

Matthew 4.17-22

From that time on Jesus began to preach, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will send you out to fish for people.' At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

1. Jesus was very clear about his mission – this is the first thing we read in verse 17. I suggest putting this verse into your own words like a personal mission statement you identify with:

2. Jesus did not have a one man ministry, he knew that the Kingdom of God would be spread by men and women like you and me.

Discuss in your group what spiritual gifts you and other people have in your group. Make a list of them and see how God uses all different people working together.

3. In verses 15-16 we see that in starting his ministry Jesus went to a place that other people may not have immediately gone to. Jesus also chose men to start his ministry that people may not have chosen. Write a list of people you would want if you were starting your ideal ministry:

Compare this to any knowledge you have about the disciples Jesus chose:

4. One thing I notice is that the disciples Jesus chose were at work and were hard working people – casting their nets and mending their nets. What kinds of priorities do you think Jesus has for us as his disciples? What does Jesus look for in our hearts? What qualities?

5. We see that Andrew and Simon then James and John immediately dropped their nets and followed Jesus. Why do you think that was?

Jesus also made a slightly strange comment saying 'Follow me and catch men and not fish'. We see that Jesus used what the disciples were 'into' (fishing) and then related this to the Kingdom of God. What ways can you and I relate to people using what their 'into'? An idea may be a church for skaters or young people..

6. The disciples not only left their boats and nets, they left their families. Jesus is clear that following him means sacrifice. Read Luke 14.25-33 about the cost of being a disciple. What did Jesus say and what can we learn from this?

7. What else can you learn from this Bible passage?
