**Week of March 31, 2019**

**Matthew 4:12-22**

12 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; 13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: 14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; 16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up\*. 17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19 And he saith unto them, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20 And they straightway left their nets and followed him. 21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. 22 And they immediately left the ship and their father and followed him.

**Understanding the Scriptures**

Today’s lesson is centers around Matthew’s account of Jesus’ call of the first disciples and the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy in Isaiah 9:1-2. Matthew linked the Old Testament with the Good New of the New Testament to help the Jewish leaders understand that Jesus was in indeed the Messiah, Jesus started His ministry with same message that John the Baptist commonly used. Jesus told the people to “turn form your sins and turn to God, because the kingdom of heaven is near”, The “kingdom of heaven” has the same meaning as the “kingdom of God”, which is used in Mark and Luke. Jesus encourage the people to turn from sin and become followers of Christ. Jesus needed to build a community of believers who would be committed enough to share the Good News. Jesus called the first disciples as He walked along the shores of the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee is actually a large lake that was surrounded by approximately thirty fishing towns during Jesus days of ministry, Jesus called four fishermen – Peter, Andrew, James, and John. The disciples were ordinary people and unlikely representative of the kingdom. Each disciple has unique personally characteristics: Peter was often led by his feelings; Andrew was teachable, available, and sensitive to the things of God; and James and John were impatient and self-seeking. God’s ability to touch and change us is powerful that even the most arrogant, cold-hearted, or mean person can learn to love, think, and act in a way that please God. These disciples were willing to leave everything behind and follow Jesus without knowing exactly what to expect. They followed because they had faith and fully trusted Jesus. Jesus calls each of us to trust, obey and follow Him, Wen Jesus asks us to follow Him, we must be like these disciples- willing to drop what we are doing and follow Him quickly.

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