Pastor Sara Mietzner
October 25, 2009
Matthew 4:12-16

Please use the space below to take notes on today's message:

Take It Homework

We encourage you to not only do these exercises on your own, but also with a group of friends, co-workers, neighbors, small group or family members.

In the preceding chapters, Matthew has written about the fulfilled prophesies that describe Jesus as Messiah: the prophesied miraculous birth; the prophetic forerunner's (John the Baptist) announcement of Jesus' arrival; Jesus' anointing for ministry by the Holy Spirit after John baptized Him, and His confirmation by the Father ("This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased"); and Jesus' establishment of His authoritative power as the Son over Satan. In Matthew 4:12-16, John's public ministry is now terminated and Jesus proceeds to the land of prophesied deliverance—Galilee. And even though all of these things were prophesied Jesus is still not what people expected Him to be.

- Even today, individuals and groups of people expect Jesus to be something He is not and are misinformed as to who He is. Name a few examples of this.
- Can you think of a way you personally are expecting Jesus to be something He is not?
- Can you think of a way that you minimize who Jesus is—the full breadth of His character?

Read Luke 15:11-31 (the story of the Prodigal Son).

The Prodigal Son experienced conflict in his life which motivated him to repent. He was living with the pigs and was miserable! During the time of Matthew 4, the people were in conflict spiritually and politically, and Jesus' message to them was, "Repent: The Kingdom of Heaven is Near!"

- What are some areas of conflict in your life today?
- Do you see a need for repentance inside those conflicts?
- What are some steps you could take to make a turn within your conflict(s)?
- How would that turn or those steps toward repentance get you closer to the Father (just as the Prodigal Son came home to his father)?

Jesus made His plea for repentance on the brink of His manifestation of the Kingdom of Heaven ("the kingdom of heaven is near"). He was about to do some amazing things that would reveal who God is. When we are close to the Father, we are able to see God at work.

- Is there an area of your life where you see that God might be on the brink of doing something amazing? Describe what you are sensing.
- Why do you think it would be important, and even necessary, to repent prior to a new thing God might be doing?
- Is there anything else you learned from the sermon this week that challenged, motivated, encouraged or cause you to think or act?