

# Matthew 4:12–25

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[ 0 : 00 ] 9 and one from Matthew 4. We're reading the Isaiah text because you'll find it cited by Matthew, the gospel writer. Please open your Bible to Isaiah 9, verse 1 through 2.

Please remain standing for the reading of God's word. But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time, he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. But in the latter time, he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwell in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. Please turn to Matthew chapter 4.

Starting at verse 12. Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled. The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light. And for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned. From that time, Jesus began to preach, saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. While walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who was called

Peter, and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. Immediately they left their nets and followed him.

And going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in the boat with Zebedee, their father, mending their nets. And he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics. And he healed them. And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. You may be seated.

[ 3 : 10 ] Father, we come to you and we think of a group of people who approach the disciples.

And when the disciples asked what they wanted, they simply responded, we would like to see Jesus. And so would that be our request this morning? That we would see Jesus. Help us to that end, we pray. Amen.

Amen. This past week, I had a conversation with a student who was exploring the Christian faith. Jesus was foreign, strange. The Bible was an unfamiliar text. The church was a peculiar people, an unusual space. And as the student pressed into my testimony, my upbringing, my education, my vocational transition, the curiosity intensified, and eventually led to the question, what does it look like when you meet Jesus? What does it look like when you meet Jesus?

And this morning, I want to demonstrate to you from this text, what happens when you have an authentic encounter with Jesus? I would be naive to believe that all who come into this place are Christian.

I know there are some in this space who are looking, exploring, in search for what their heart seeks. How can you tell if Jesus passes by? How would you know if he glanced your way?

[ 5 : 26 ] There are those who are genuinely asking, is this my faith or is this actually my father's faith? You've come with a friend on several occasions, and now you're genuinely curious how Jesus could possibly become a friend. Your sincere question is, how do I know when Jesus shows up?

What happens when I truly meet him? What happens when Jesus shows? And so I've taken for my title, when Jesus shows up.

When Jesus shows up, you will see a great light. When Jesus shows up, you will hear a great call.

When Jesus shows up, you will taste a great kingdom. I'm done. But there you have it.

It's lifted straight from the text, in case you're curious. Those are my three points that will organize our time. A great light extracted, lifted directly from verse 16.

[ 6 : 43 ] A great call taken from verses 19 and following. A great kingdom taken.

Sorry, I switched Bibles this morning. From 23. They're all there. A great light.

Jesus' earthly ministry is well under, or has just launched. It is underway. Last week, we saw that he was battle-tested and triumphant. Triumphant. Matthew, the writer, has assured us that he will not buckle in the face of the devil.

We are to be confident that heaven's son will accomplish his earthly mission. Our text this morning begins with an arrest. John the Baptist, Jesus' predecessor, has been arrested.

He's arrested, we're told later on in the 14th chapter, for proclaiming righteousness. Pronouncing judgment on Herod the king who had taken his brother's wife to be his own.

[ 7 : 49 ] As John fades from the scene in verse 12, as he exits stage right, Jesus now walks onto center stage.

Surprisingly, his work doesn't thrust him into Jerusalem, the center of Israel's social, religious, and political life. But rather, he is found withdrawing to Galilee, quite far from the capital, at least 60 miles as the crow flies.

And he situates himself on the outskirts of the land of Israel. Interestingly, it's where most of his public ministry takes place. Though it was on the periphery, we are not to think of it as possessing few inhabitants.

Josephus, the Jewish historian writing a generation later, cites that Galilee had 204 towns or cities, none of them, which had less than 15,000 people.

If you do the math, Josephus, at least, attests that there were 3 million people in the region of Galilee. That's double, more than double, than what exists today.

[ 9 : 01 ] Jesus may have ministered in insignificant places, but certainly not to insignificant numbers. And though he was raised in Nazareth, it will be made known in chapter 13, he would be rejected by Nazareth, his very own hometown.

So he decides to move. And he settles in Capernaum, where his ministry commences. Capernaum was a hotbed for Jesus' work.

11 of his 37 miracles happened in Capernaum. It's where evil spirits are driven out. Peter's mother-in-law was healed from illness.

A paralytic enabled to walk. And Capernaum would be abuzz. I mean, can you imagine this? Jesus moves into your town. Capernaum would be abuzz with the presence of Jesus.

So much so that Mark tells us, at least on one occasion, that the whole city was gathered at his door. His fame and his crowd-drawing power were evident.

[ 10 : 11 ] But for Matthew, what's interesting is Capernaum is not significant for what Jesus did, though he did 11 of his 37 miracles there.

Yes, he'll record a few of those later on. But instead of recounting all the miracles that Jesus performed in Capernaum, he turns to his Hebrew Bible and cites from Isaiah chapter 9 and 1 and 2, which Amy read for us.

He is far more concerned that Jesus switched hometowns than what Jesus did in this town.

On the surface, you may think, big deal. Nazareth, Capernaum, never been there. Doesn't matter. Does it really? But for Matthew, it actually exceeded the mere miraculous works.

For Matthew, it was a promise that was being kept. It was a fulfillment of a past expectation that was now being met.

[ 11 : 21 ] It was the act of making something full, filling it, providing the full amount to make something total or complete. The people of God had set expectations and made anticipations, and Matthew now saw them completed.

It comes out of Isaiah chapter 9. It's a sad chapter. The people of God are told that the big bad wolf, Assyria, would come and take the nation.

And the people of Israel would fall and be broken. They would be snared and taken. The people would be greatly distressed and go hungry. They will look all around the earth. But behold, all they

see is distress, darkness, gloom, anguish.

And they would be thrust into this thick darkness. The future would be bleak. And then comes the announcement of Isaiah chapter 9, verses 1 and 2.

A light will dawn in the darkness. Suddenly, there will be a reversal from the gloom and the anguish. And it would happen in the land of Zebulun and Naphtali.

[12:42] In the northwest region of the Sea of Galilee that was once an area of contempt and darkness, a place of Assyrian captivity, a great light would break forth.

And here, Matthew says, now it's fulfilled. Jesus is the great light that would dawn. Matthew understood that the prophets anticipated this messianic figure.

See, collectively, you could think of it this way. Collectively, the prophets of the Old Testament had put together a messianic order of sorts. It's a principle familiar to us, or at least most of us.

You might have heard of the website Amazon.com. It's a little one. But if I go to Amazon and I place an order of 10 items.

Yes, sometimes it's 10 items. I'm setting forth an expectation. An anticipation that in time it will be completed and it will be fulfilled.

[13:43] Often, you might discover large orders come in several deliveries. So on Monday, I might receive four of the 10 items. And there, I get an email.

Four of your 10 items have been delivered. Your order is partially fulfilled. And then I wait another two more days and another five items come.

I've received nine of the 10 that I've expected. And Amazon replies, you have one outstanding delivery. It will arrive the next day.

And so it does. And all along the week, I receive these partial fulfillments. Incomplete. Until I receive the final shipment.

I receive an email that confirms that what I expected and anticipated is now completely fulfilled. That's what the Old Testament prophets had.

[14:41] If you summarize their catalog. I'm looking for a Messiah. I'm looking for a Messiah.

And you have Isaiah. You have Jeremiah. You have Ezekiel. You have all the names along the way. That's the order list.

And Matthew comes along as the Amazon driver. Check. Check. Check. Partially fulfilled.

Finally fulfilled in Jesus. See, Matthew reads his Old Testament this way. Fulfilled is his word.

122. Chapter 2. Verse 15. 17. 23. 414. You'll see it all along the way in the book of Matthew. The prophets have placed an order for Messiah. And now the delivery confirmations are all arriving.

[15:45] And Matthew needs you and I, the reader, to know it is completed in Jesus. Jesus. Well, I've centered this first point on verse 16.

When Jesus shows up, a light dawns upon those in the shadow of death. A great light appears to those in darkness.

You see, darkness hides all things from view, doesn't it? It's a condition that even if you have perfect eyes, perfect vision, darkness makes you blind.

It's a hopeless and it's a helpless condition. And you may sit in this room and upon self-reflection and even a sense of gloom, anguish, and distress.

Perhaps there's a void. There's an unfulfillment, an emptiness. You've tried to generate your own light. You've tried self-help. You've tethered yourself to some human relationship that you think illumines life.

[16:53] You've done all within your might. But you still sense your soul dwells in darkness. You see, this is the diagnosis of the human condition.

It's not that some of us sit in darkness. And some of us sit in light. It's all of us sit in darkness. We are all those dwelling in darkness until Jesus shows up.

How do I know I'm encountering Jesus? Well, given our condition, it's an admission that I cannot see. It's coming to terms with this heart of mine that when I take inventory, I'm actually morally bankrupt.

I am by nature a rebel. I am broken and in darkness. And how do I know this light is actually breaking forth? Well, it's given in verse 17.

Because Jesus now opens his mouth and he proclaims, repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. Because when Jesus shows up, when he turns on the lights, repentance happens.



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crow crow crow crow crow crow crow crow While they're in their established ways of life, he calls people, you see it here, from their families.

Wait, what? He calls people from their vocation. He calls people to leave behind everything. A radical call. And here what we find, the radical call is not met by rejection or reception.

[ 24 : 00 ] A radical call is met with a radical response. The immediacy is so striking. Verses 20 and 22 are like identical. Immediately.

Immediately. Like, like, Matthew, like immediately, like within like 30 seconds, what I request from my children. Or immediately, like within that week or that month.

Like how immediate is it? He doesn't tell us that. But immediately they left and followed him. And I wonder if this is a picture of the repentance that we're supposed to see.

It's this exchange. A grand exchange. I'm trading the kingdom of the world for the kingdom of heaven. It's I'm turning from what keeps me from turning.

It's turning and seizing the kingdom of God. Can you imagine that? I'm going to trade catching fish for catching people.

[ 25 : 04 ] I'm supposed to become a fisher of men instead of catchers of fish. Is that an upgrade or a downgrade?

And here we have this unique call. But this unique call is also a universal call. It's unique in this sense, right?

These four are part of the original 12. They are the unrepeatable squad. They are the original dream team. They are the foundation of the church.

According to Ephesians 2, their ministry was unique. Their vocational transformation was distinct. Their interaction with Jesus was so special. They saw him.

They heard him. They touched him. They were the original band commissioned to go and make disciples, fulfilling their vocation of catching men.

[ 26 : 06 ] In this way, they are unique. Or the call is unique. But this call is also universal. It's a call that goes out to you. And you.

And you. And me. It's a call that comes to you. Follow me.

Follow me. And I will make you. The radicalness of the call is still there. The weight of the call is still there. The urgency of the call is still there.

The burden of the call is still there. The demand of the call is still there. The scope and the scale of the call is all there. And the source of the call is the same. The calling of the four is certainly an example, an illustration for us.

It's a picture for all of us who want to be disciples. It calls us out. In order to put us into a relationship with Jesus.

[ 27 : 10 ] There is a forsaking. There is an abandoning. There is a leaving. There is a dropping of your nets. There is a possible diminishment.

Of earthly relationships with loved ones. The call. Will always come at a cost. If you heard him rightly.

Let me say that again. The call. Will always come at a cost. If you heard him rightly. I'm not sure what the cost is for you.

I'm beginning to understand what the cost is for me. We see what it cost the disciples. May you hear it. May you hear it. May you hear it.

May you hear it. The great call. May you hear it. As you wallow in darkness. May you hear it.

[ 28 : 16 ] In your agony. May you hear it. In the solitude of your bedroom. May you hear it. As you drive in the car. May you hear it. When your face is buried in a book.

In the reg. May you hear it. With flask in hand. Or spatula in hand. May you hear. The call. It's the call that comes. And declares.

That. I will make. Something. Of you. You thought. Your life's purpose was blank. I will make it. This. You thought. The meaning of life was this. I will. Make it. This. You thought. The greatest relationship.

Was that. I will show you. The greatest relationship. Is this. When Jesus shows up. You hear a great call.

[ 29 : 19 ] Lastly. Thirdly. This. When Jesus shows up. I'm excited about this one.

You taste. A great kingdom. You taste. A great kingdom. When new governments. Or regimes. Come to power.

It's expected that. Changes happen. Perhaps. New legislation. Perhaps. New benefits. Facets of the old. Will be.

Discarded. And verses. 23. To 25. Give us a taste. For the new kingdom. Heaven's empire. These verses. Introduce.

The next five chapters. Matthew is actually previewing. What we're about to read. Jesus is recorded. According to verse 23. As. Going throughout the region.

[ 30 : 15 ] And teaching. In the synagogues. And proclaiming. The gospel. Of the kingdom. It has. A particular ethic. We'll find. In chapters.

Five to seven. And in chapters. Eight to nine. It has. A particular. Power. Namely. The power. To heal. When the kingdom. Of heaven.

Is manifested. Through teach. The kingdom. Of heaven. Is manifested. Through teaching. Proclamation. And healing. When Jesus. Shows up. A king.

A great kingdom. Is not only. Proclaimed. But it's experienced. People. Tasted. The kingdom. You see it there.

Healing. Every. Disease. Not every. Oh. In case. You overlook. That every. And every. Affliction.

[ 31 : 14 ] Just for some. People. Right. Bing. Just the few. The special. Ones. No. All Syria. All.

The sick. And where do they come from. Bing. Matthew. Where are they coming from. Well. They're coming from Galilee. The Decapolis.

On the east side. Of the Jordan. They're coming from. Jerusalem. 60 miles south. They're coming from Judea. The whole region. In the south. They're coming from beyond.

The Jordan. And here you have it. When the kingdom came. It touched all people. In all conditions. In all places. And whether you have. Physical infirmities. Or spiritual oppression. It did not matter.

[ 32 : 08 ] Jesus could heal them all. To put it in royal terms. He would rule over it all. He would be king over all people. All places. At all times. You see. He's not.

He's not the physician. That says. Well. I have the just. I can only do like. I'm a one trick pony. I can only do the eye thing. I can only take care of the blind people. The ophthalmologists.

Right. Like. Oh. You're having eye degenerative things. Optimal. Let's go. Oh. You're having. Restrictive joint movements. Oh.

You go. BT. Physical therapist. Jesus. Can you only do that stuff. Like. The. The crippled. And the lame. Can you do that one too.

Oh yeah. I could do that one. Or maybe. Maybe. About seizures. What about when it's not right here.

[ 33 : 10 ] Here we. On earth. We say. Go see the neurologist. But scan them. Scan them over. And over. And over. Jesus. Can you do those things. In the mind. Can you take care of that.

And Matthew answers. Whatever you have. It does not matter. Jesus can heal. Thank you. The gospel.

Or the good news. Of the kingdom. Is that whatever is broken. Can be fixed. Whatever is hurting. Can be alleviated. Whatever affliction you have. You can find relief.

In the kingdom. Circumstances. In this kingdom. Circumstances. That have. Such. As those that have. Transpired. In Nashville.

Are dispelled. Dispelled. Global situations. When. International laws. Are transgressed.

[ 34 : 06 ] And war. And destruction. Ensues. Doesn't happen. In this kingdom. See. When Jesus. Shows up. You not only.

See a great light. Hear a great call. But you. Taste the great kingdom. One that is marked. By healing. And the question. That you're going to pose. That I pose. To myself. Is.

Jesus. You still do this stuff. Do you still do this stuff. It appears.

Normalized. By Matthew. And it certainly is. Should I expect. This today. Does healing. Still happen. Along these lines. And I'll just tell you.

Of course. Of course. Certainly. Infirmities. And afflictions. Can be healed. For Matthew.

[ 35 : 04 ] This is a facet. Of the kingdom. Where Jesus. Is present. All pains. Are gone. It's how the kingdom. Is conveyed. At the end of the Bible. Right? There's no.

The tears. Are wiped away. From eyes. Death. Is no more. There's no more. Mourning. No more crying. All pain. Will pass. Why? Because evil. Is defeated. And the king.

Is. Permanently. Present. But. This. Matthew.

Doesn't write. To record. Miracles. None of the gospels. Made that their aim. I want us. To be clear here. And I'm. I'm winding down. Possibly. Ratcheting up. But John. The apostle. Writes. At the end of his. Biography of Jesus. Hey.

[ 36 : 00 ] You know what? If I actually. Wrote it all down. I don't think the world. Would have enough. Space. For this. But Jesus. Is not.

Merely. A miracle. Worker. He is God's. King. Bringing in. God's. Rain. And rule. And we must. We cannot. Forget.

Matthew's. Opening. Purpose. Statement. Do you recall. The first statement. Matthew. Made about Jesus's. Purpose. Oh yeah.

I know. We know the identity. I know you memorize. The genealogy. You know the lineage. You know. That he is the son of Abraham. The son of David. The son of Mary. The son of God.

We know. The identity. Pieces. Jesus. But do you remember. The purpose. The first purpose. Statement. In chapter 1.

[ 36 : 58 ] Verse 21. You're going to call his name. Mary. You're going to call him Jesus. Because he's going to heal the world.

No. You're going to call him Jesus. Because he's going to save. People. From their sins. Matthew wants you and I. To know from the outset. He could have certainly. Declared that Jesus. Was Jehovah Ratha. The God who heals. He could have declared that. He can heal. And does heal. And will heal. And one day. He'll permanently. And fully. He will fulfill. What he has promised. Be certain of that. But the big deal.

About Jesus. Is not that he. Heals infirmities. Hear me clearly. That's not. The big deal. About Jesus. Jesus. Matthew shouts.

[ 37 : 57 ] At the beginning. Of his book. You want to know. The big deal. About Jesus. It's not that he. He heals. Your infirmities. It's that he. Forgives.

Your. Sins. Jesus. Saves. People.

From their sins. And you have it. Attested to again. By one of these four. Simon. Who is called Peter. Later on in the Bible.

He. He who answered the call. The great call. He heard the great call. He connects the dots for us. In his little letter. Jesus himself.

Bore our sins. On. In his body. On the tree. That we might die. To sin. And live to righteousness. And here.

[ 38 : 53 ] You want no healing. By his wounds. You are healed. Peter. Reiterates. What Matthew. Postulates.

The greatest healing. That comes to you. Is a heart. That is forgiven. In a right. Relationship. With God. It is when a rebel. Becomes.

Righteous. It is when a sinner. Becomes. A saint. It is when you have. Looked upon. The beloved. Son of God. Crucified. On your behalf.

Seize. His sacrificial. Death. In your stead. Then. You have tasted. The kingdom. He is here. This morning. Do you see the great light? Jesus is here.

[ 39 : 54 ] This morning. Do you hear the great call? Christ is present. In this.

Place. Can you taste. The kingdom. When Jesus shows up.

This is. What happens. Come. You sinner. Poor and needy.

Weak and wounded. Sick and sore. Jesus ready. Jesus ready. He stands. To save you. Full of pity. Love and power. Come. You weary.

Heavy laden. Lost in ruin. By the fall. If you tarry. Until you're better. You will never come at all.

[ 40 : 56 ] And so. Arise. And go to Jesus. Jesus. He will. Embrace you.

In his arms. Father. Father. We. We thank you for this morning.

And my prayer. Is that we all meet Jesus. Whether for the first time. Or the 50th. Or the 500th time. We're here.

To see Jesus. We want to see Jesus. And so for those.

In darkness. May you be their great light. For those. Who are lost.

[ 42 : 02 ] May they hear. Your great call. For those. Who think. Earth. Is all there is. May they taste.

Your great kingdom. We ask these things.

In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.