

**Dwelling in the Word**

Prayerfully read through Matthew 4:17-25 and ask: 1) What words, phrases, or images stood out to you? 2) What does this say about what God desires to accomplish in you? 3) How could you respond to what God says in this passage?

**Beginning the Conversation**

1. Do you remember the moment you decided to follow Jesus? What were some of the deciding factors that encouraged you to make that choice?
2. Is there any part of Jesus' call to the fisherman that parallels your call to follow Jesus?
3. What are some stories you have about experiencing the "kingdom of heaven" in a tangible way?

**Digging Deeper** (*pick some of the following questions to discuss as a group*)

1. What difference does the theological truth that Christ followers are citizens of the kingdom of heaven, while we are still on earth and the fullness kingdom is yet future? Using Peter's language of Christians being "temporary residents and foreigners" (1Peter 2:11, NLT), how does change the way we engage with the world?
2. Look up "repent" in a dictionary. What does "repent" mean for Matthew? Do you think repentance is a one-time thing or is it more of an ongoing course correction in our relationship with God and others?
3. Jesus' call to the disciples to follow him is a call to a continuous walk with Jesus, rather than a single act towards him. How is this different from how you understand the call to salvation? Is there something about the metaphor of "following Jesus" that brings out this ongoing relationship with Jesus better than the language of "accepting Jesus"?
4. Based on Matthew 4:23-24, what did Jesus' Galilean ministry consist of? How do each of these activities demonstrate the in-breaking of the kingdom of heaven? What ways do you see the kingdom breaking into the present nowadays?
5. How do you understand the possibility of healings and exorcisms today in the light of the already not-yet presence of the kingdom? Put another way, how does the promise that one day all followers will be healed and resurrected to new life when the kingdom comes in its fullness (e.g., 1Cor 15), relate to the healing presence of the kingdom today?

**Living it Out**

1. On Sunday we talked about the importance of being in proximity with one another. One of the ways we do that is by getting connected to others in a smaller group setting. If you are already connected to a group at Greenfield, what is one way you can be more intentional about your involvement this year? If you aren't already connected to a group, are some steps you could take to be connected to one?
2. Is there an area in your life where you need to repent, i.e., "turn around and go the other way" in order to follow Jesus more fully? If that is something you would feel comfortable sharing with others, find someone to talk to about that this week



## A Kingdom

- There is a king.
- The king must rule.
- For there to be rule, there has to be a people.
- A king governs with a law.
- A law-giving king governs a people who live in a land.

## Jesus' First Disciples

- Call as a continuous walk with Jesus, rather than a single act towards him.
- Jesus' call is for everyone.

## The Kingdom is Near

- The kingdom is near. Jesus brings heaven's reign to earth.
- We follow Jesus (being near to Jesus allows us to live in the kingdom)
- We experience healing and restoration in God's presence.
- Today, God's presence is experienced in real, ordinary places (like in the community of our congregation).