

6. The way Matthew ties Jesus withdrawing to Galilee after John’s arrest sounds like he is making a strategic decision to get out of the area around Jerusalem. There’s nothing unspiritual about strategizing, but the way we do it can be wrong. Make your own list of ways we go wrong in devising our plans according to the following passages:

James 4:13-17 Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.

Psalm 20:7 Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

Psalm 146:3-5 Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing. Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God.

7. What are some of the ways can we proclaim Jesus’s message of repentance (Matthew 4:17) in words and deeds in a way that offers hope to people living in darkness? (Think about real conversations with someone on your BLESS prayer list.)

Where is God leading you with your BLESS list this week?



God's Rescue Operation

“Jesus is on the Move”
Matthew 4:12-17

“They say Aslan is on the move—perhaps has already landed. ...At the name of Aslan each one of the children felt something jump in its inside. Edmund felt a sensation of mysterious horror. Peter felt suddenly brave and adventurous. Susan felt as if some delicious smell or some delightful strain of music had just floated by her. And Lucy got the feeling you have when you wake up in the morning and realize that it is the beginning of the holidays or the beginning of summer.” (C.S. Lewis, The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe)

A Record Scratch Moment

Matthew 4:12-16

Why did Jesus go north when all the action is south in Jerusalem?

- Apparently Jesus withdraws to Galilee as a matter of _____.

There’s simply nothing _____ about strategizing for ministry

When problems arise in devising our plans, the problems are always in the way we’re strategizing—we presume God will go along with our plans (James 4:13-17), we depend on human resources _____ from God (Psalm 20:7; 146:3-5), or we focus on our own goals instead of God’s (Proverbs 19:21; Matthew 6:33).

- Jesus is renewing the _____ in his ministry.

“You're either a missionary or a mission field.” (J.D. Grear)

Turn or Burn

Matthew 3:7-10

Jesus calls us to turn or burn (like John did), but he has a lot more _____ things to do and say before he gets to the burn part. We are wise and more in line with Jesus when we follow his lead.

Repentance and faith are two sides of the same _____.

Blind Spots

Matthew 4:17

If we can have such a huge, collective blind spot about Jesus's teaching...

- It ought to _____ us.

The Bible calls us to have firm convictions, but we don't have to be arrogant and ungracious in our _____.

- We have certainly also _____ some of what Jesus taught.

When you read about what Jesus said and did, be ready to be _____.

Works Consulted and Resources Recommended:

- R.T. France, The Gospel of Matthew (NICNT)
- The Ten Minute Bible Hour, Episodes 66-69
- N.T. Wright, Matthew for Everyone (Part One)

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Explain how you are or are not much of a planner in your personal or family life.
3. Read Matthew 4:12-17. The prophecy speaks of Jesus as one who brings light into darkness. What are some of the ways Jesus's message, as summarized in v. 17, brings light into dark places?
4. Jesus's ministry began in a place of darkness (Matthew 4:16). How does this give us hope in our lowest and darkest moments?
5. Even though we have the light of Christ, we still have blind spots in our lives. What can we do to see and address those blind spots?