

The Week

week starting 26 1 20

123

Connecting the Sunday Sparkle at Hearsall Baptist with the Daily Dust of Life

Welcome

Tell us about a comedian you like.

Worship

Read Psalm 27: 1 - 5

Share a verse or thought that inspires you or puzzles you from the Psalm.

Word

Read Matthew 4: 12 - 17

Jesus seems to have established something of a base in Capernaum on the north shore of Lake Galilee. Matthew came from this town; and Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John came from nearby Bethsaida. Among all the gospel writers, only Matthew makes the connection between Jesus' residence in northern Galilee and the prophecy of Isaiah.

- Why might this have mattered to Matthew? What does it tell you about the people he was writing for?
- Does the quotation from Isaiah inspire you in any way?
- What was the initial content of Jesus' message (verse 17)? Do you think the rest of his teaching can be seen as an unpacking of these words?

(The Greek word translated 'repent' in verse 17 is *metanoia*, meaning something like this: a personal transformation through a deep change at the core of one's being; a turning away from what is false or sinful towards what is true and good.)

Read Matthew 4: 18 - 22

- How come Simon, Andrew, James and John are so quick to respond to Jesus' invitation to follow him? (Remember last week's gospel passage in John 1:37 - 42 which presumably details an interaction with Jesus prior to the one described in Matthew.)
- All four men leave nets and boats behind; James and John leave their father Zebedee. Two thousand years later, we may feel that Jesus calls us to follow him. Jesus was going on a ministry tour of his country and beyond; to follow him was going to mean leaving things behind. For us in our modern lives today, what

sort of things might Jesus ask us to leave behind if we ‘follow him’?

- Sometimes people leave behind something which is good in order to receive something that is even better. Can you think of an example? See also Matthew 19:29.
- We’re presumably not going on a tour of the country, so what does it mean for us to follow him?

Response (*Maybe one to do together this week.*)

Ponder the theme of **a light-hearted faith**. It could mean any of these things:

1. Having God’s light shine in your heart.
 2. Leaving behind things that are heavy or burdensome.
 3. Not taking yourself too seriously; enjoying laughter and taking a simple pleasure in life.
- How do these notions of light-heartedness connect with each other?
 - What would you like to leave behind to make you more light hearted?