

amazed at the catch, Jesus *literally* said to them: “Do not fear, from now [on] men you will capture alive.”

4. **What Characterized Jesus’ Ministry – vv. 23-24:** <sup>23</sup> And Jesus was going about in all Galilee, **teaching** in their synagogues, and **proclaiming** the gospel of the kingdom, and **healing** every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people. <sup>24</sup> And the news about Him went out into all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, taken with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them. **Jesus taught God’s Word of truth and proclaimed the good news of His saving work; then, to validate and certify the truthfulness of His words, He cast out demons and healed every kind of disease and sickness!**

**Conclusion – v. 25:** <sup>25</sup> And great multitudes followed Him from **Galilee** and **Decapolis** and **Jerusalem** and **Judea** and from **beyond the Jordan**. Both Jews AND Gentiles → heard Jesus teach, → believed by grace, → witnessed His miracles, and → followed Him!

**Even though we see with the eyes of faith; nevertheless, we see and, by grace, we believe!** We are blessed ♦to have God’s Word, the Bible, ♦to understand God’s work from creation to salvation, and, ♦to see – *even now* – many of the signs that point toward Jesus’ return!

Therefore, let us know and rejoice: **He is God, our Savior!**  
And all God’s people said: *Amen!*

# The Beginning of Jesus’ Ministry!

Based on **Matthew 4:12-25**

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany – 2011*  
January 23 → 8:00 & 10:45

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Jesus Christ, we find ourselves in the church-year-season of Epiphany when God is at work through the assigned readings to help us know – *for certain* – that Jesus is → His Son, → the Christ, and → the One who came to take away our sins! Today, *as we read about the beginning of Jesus’ ministry*, let us especially notice the things that help us know He is our Savior!

1. **Where Jesus Lived – vv. 12-16:** <sup>NAS</sup> **Matthew 4:12** Now when He heard that **John** [the Baptizer] had been **taken into custody**, He withdrew into Galilee; <sup>13</sup> and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in **Capernaum, which is by the sea**, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. <sup>14</sup> *This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying,* <sup>15</sup> **“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali**, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles-- <sup>16</sup> The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, And **to those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, Upon them a light dawned.**”

- a. John taken into custody – John said of himself:  
<sup>NAS</sup> **John 3:28** “...I have been sent before the Christ,... He must increase, but I must decrease.”  
*John decreased* when he was put into prison; *Jesus increased* when He moved to Capernaum.
- b. Capernaum, by the sea – Capernaum was located on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, which allowed Jesus to easily travel across the sea to the many cities located on its shores.
- c. The land of Zebulun and Naphtali – An OT way to identify *the Galilean land in general*.
- d. To those in the shadow of death, a light dawned – Regarding those people, Lenski wrote: **They “were at their lowest point, all spiritual light was gone, there was absolutely no hope or help in themselves: then God stepped in and in pure grace sent them a heavenly gift, the help of salvation in Christ Jesus.”** (167) He is *the Light of the World!* (John 8:12) We have the same blessing – *by grace through faith in Jesus!*

2. **What Jesus Preached – v. 17:** <sup>17</sup> From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**”

- a. Such preaching, *according to Lenski*, “**is not to argue, reason, dispute, or convince by intellectual proof... We simply...testify to all men the truth which God bids us state.**” (168) That truth is this: ✦ we are sinners, ✦ we are helpless to save ourselves, and ✦ **Jesus has rescued us through His perfect life and sacrificial death!** *So believe and benefit!*
- b. Earlier, *in the wilderness of Judea*, **John** had preached: <sup>NAS</sup> **Matthew 3:2** “Repent, for the kingdom

of heaven is at hand.” Therefore, it is obvious that **Jesus continued where John left off.** Furthermore, Jesus fulfilled these words of prophecy: <sup>NAS</sup> **Isaiah 61:1** “...the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives, And freedom to prisoners...” **Even though we were in spiritual bondage, God, through Jesus, has set us free and filled us with great joy!**

3. **Who Jesus’ Called to Follow Him – vv. 18-22:** <sup>18</sup> And 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. <sup>19</sup> And He said to them, “**Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.**” <sup>20</sup> And they immediately left the nets, and followed Him. <sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> And they immediately left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

- a. Two brothers, Peter and Andrew – From John chapter 1 (35-42) we know Peter and Andrew were already Jesus’ disciples, *now they are called to be His apostles!* Before this call, they ✦ trusted in Him, ✦ lived for Him, and ✦ fished for fish; now, **they would be personally trained by Jesus to fish for men!**
- b. Two other brothers, James and John – From Luke chapter 5 (1-11) we know about the miraculous catch of fish, which caused the nets to break. Then, when they – *Peter, Andrew, James, and John* – were