

Matthew 4:12-25

“Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: that is might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias [Isaiah] the prophet, saying Nephthalim, *by* way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness

saw *great* light; and to them which sat in the region of the shadow of death light is sprung up [Isaiah 9:1-2]. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils [demons, demonic possession], and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, and *from* Jerusalem, and *from* Judea, and *from* beyond Jordan.”

Jesus Begins His Galilean Ministry

True Christians Share What They Know About Jesus

So, **verses 12-17 of chapter 4** where we left off last week, **“Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of**

Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying,

“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.” [Isaiah 9:1-2]

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” Now, if you remember, we left off last week, Jesus had the encounter with the devil. Now verse 12 as we just continue in Matthew, we see now that Jesus hears John the Baptist, his cousin, has been put in prison, and he departs for Galilee. Reading through Matthew, you would be led to think that happens right after his encounter with the devil. But when we put the Gospels together we find that actually there’s a year that’s transpired from verse 11 to verse 12. For whatever reason, we don’t know for sure, Matthew chooses not to give us any details about this year. Mark and Luke, they’re synoptic Gospels, they kind of collaborate a bit. If you compare those Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, there’s lots of similarities. And those three Gospels don’t give us much about this missing year, they’re basically silent on it. But John, in the first few chapters of John, he gives a lot more details. During this first year, John the Baptist is ministering, and Jesus is ministering, almost side-by-side. Jesus comes on the scene, John continues to minister and baptize for a period of time, and we read about that in the Gospel of John. Matthew is showing us here the focus, the main focus is Jesus. So he just goes from the wilderness, and he goes right to when John is in prison a year later, and just stays with Jesus, he doesn’t give us a lot of the ministry of John the Baptist that you read about in the first three chapters of John. So the main focus is Jesus, let’s keep it there, is Matthew’s intent...And I say that because it’s true, to any ministry, I mean, the focus is always Jesus. And there was this time when John the Baptist was still around, and he’s baptizing, and there are some encounters with people, and if you remember, even one time the disciples of John even question him, you know, about what’s going on with Jesus. ***‘Hey, this guy Jesus,’*** he mentions things about him, ***‘Boy, he’s getting a lot of people around him, and what do you think of that, John the Baptist? You know, his ministry is really growing and exceeding yours.’*** And of course John then comes back with a very interesting response. He says, ***“He must increase, but I must decrease.”*** I mean, he says right there, the focus is Jesus. And I think that was even prophetic,

because now, a short time later he's actually in prison. I mean, talk about a decrease in your ministry. Do I see a parallel here? The Body of Christ is a *John the Baptist* type ministry, heralding the Gospel of Salvation and heralding the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ. But when the Body of Christ is finally muzzled and shut up by the governments of this world, and a famine of the Word occurs, Jesus' real ministry to the world will be near at hand. The Bible is full of these type-anti-types. So, the Messiah, he's the focus, and that's the way it needs to be, he's the focus. It's all about him. I tell you, at this church, it's absolutely critical that we keep it that way, today, and tomorrow and the next month, and the next year, regardless of what goes on, that in every way Jesus, Yeshua is the focus, he's what it's all about, he's the main thing. And I pray that you're doing a good job as ministry leaders, that the focus to you is Jesus. It's not so much the style of music, it's not so much maybe you've got some cool friends here, you like the building, you just like the way it feels. I hope when you're coming here, that the sense to you is *'I'm coming and I'm learning about Jesus, and getting to know him.'* It's not the beautification of the property as it goes on, it's not new ministries and philosophies and ideas, it's not jazzy music and entertainment of any sort, not man's ideas, man's philosophy, but let's get to know Jesus better. I hope I'm helping you to get to know Jesus better, as I'm sharing through the Word of God. Can you make Jesus known to other people? You know, you can only make people know what you yourself know. Right? And so, do you know him, and are you making him known to others? Ministry is simply going around and sharing what you've discovered about Christ. Ministry is me getting to know Jesus, and sharing what I know. Stop worrying about church growth, and just get to know God. That's what I think Matthew is doing here, just going and following and tracing, keeping the focus and flashlight on Jesus. So I pray we don't get worried too much about church growth, and we don't get distracted, that our goal and mission would be *'Let's keep getting to know him, and let's just share with others what we know.'*

*Jesus, Yeshua Is The Prophecied Messiah, He Makes
Capernaum His Home-base*

Verses 13-14, "And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet..." Verse 13, Jesus arrives in the Galilee

area, and he initially goes up to where he grew up, you know, spent a lot of his younger years in the town of Nazareth (cf. Luke chapter 4). We're not given that here. And then he goes up to the shores of the sea of Galilee, he goes to the city of Capernaum. Capernaum is one of the most beautiful areas of Israel. It's this area just north of the city of Tiberius, Tiberius is a small city. And you go north of Tiberius and it's very desolate now as far as population, it's just a couple of kibbutzes and that's it, just beautiful, beautiful scenery as you look across the water to the Golan Heights there. But in Jesus' time, it was a real happening area, so people would come from all sorts of cultures and places, they would come to this area in this time. In fact, Capernaum was in a major trade route, so people would come from all sorts of cultures and places and would come to this area of Capernaum. Historically it was an outpost for a Roman Guard, also held some Roman civil offices. We know Matthew Levi was there, was a tax collector there. So there was this seat of customs there. And there was also a synagogue. They've done some discoveries and did some digging, and they've uncovered ruins of a synagogue under another one, the bottom layers of this synagogue date back to the time of Christ. Jesus, Yeshua himself went and taught in that synagogue. And the synagogue sits right on the shore, so you just look out over the water, great place to have your devo's man...So he goes to Capernaum, and Matthew notes that this is, this area of Galilee is in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. That's where these two tribes of Israel settled, back when the area was allotted to the 12 tribes of Israel. And then in verse 14, he says this is in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy, as he quotes then from Isaiah chapter 9, verses 1-2, declaring that the Messiah would come to this very region, to this group of people, and he would bring light to them. Now what should be noted is when you go back to Isaiah chapter 9, if you do on your own, you'll find that initially it was a prophecy to the House of Judah, the LORD was prophesying through Isaiah that he was going to deliver them from their oppressors, the Assyrians. But again, as the prophets often do, they look beyond too, to an ultimate fulfillment. And that is when this incredible life and deliverance would come in the form of the Messiah.

*Matthew Lists Prophecies Being Fulfilled That Prove
Jesus Is The Messiah Beyond A Shadow Of A Doubt*

Matthew keeps showing that even where Jesus goes, where he lives and dwells is fulfillment of the prophecies. Go back to

Matthew chapter 2, just look back, where he was born, Bethlehem, Matthew says that's a fulfillment of the prophecy found in Micah 5:2. Then he just as a baby he was taken to Egypt and lived there for a very short period of time, and that was a fulfillment of prophecy for the Messiah, and his coming out of Egypt too, Hosea 11:1. And then at the end of chapter 2, I mean, he leaves Egypt and then he ends up in Nazareth (Isaiah 11:1). And now we get to his area, the main focal area of his ministry, this is like his home-base for his ministry now, Capernaum, and that is a fulfillment of the prophecies about his life. Here he is fulfilling all these prophecies. It just goes to prove there's never been anybody like him in all history, never been anybody like him. Because prophets would speak of his life in many different ways, hundreds of different ways, and here he comes and fulfills all these prophecies about himself. Do whatever you need to do to just learn about those prophecies and see that these go back in time way before he lived, and historically these things that he did, places that he lived, are all documented in the four Gospels. And the chance of somebody fulfilling all of these prophecies is impossible (see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/prophecies/1stcoming.htm>). Maybe one or two, but as often quoted, scholars and mathematicians who are into the science of mathematical probabilities have calculated that the chance of someone being able to fulfill just eight of these prophecies about the Messiah would be **one in ten to the seventeenth power, which is like a one with sixteen zeroes behind it.** You know, taking the prophecies of being from Nazareth, born in Bethlehem, being of the seed of David, which we saw in chapter 1, just take 8 of them and it's impossible for somebody to fulfill all that, that somebody could do that without it being a Divine miracle. So that's what Matthew's showing, all these things were foretold before, centuries, millennia before in some cases, and Jesus, Yeshua of Nazareth is fulfilling all of these prophecies Matthew lists in his Gospel. He's unique, he's the Messiah.

Jesus Brings Light To Those Who Live In Darkness

Verses 15-16, "The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." Isaiah declared that long ago, that he would bring hope to this people in this region. He'd bring hope, incredible hope to the descendants of the people that

have lived there. The ministry of Christ brings hope, brings hope to the hopeless. The people of Jerusalem would look up north, and they would see these people as *'the hicks,'* as second-class citizens, you know for various reasons. Of course during the exiles, they intermarried with the Gentile nations. Actually the Galilee and Samaria region, north of Judah and Jerusalem, used to be inhabited by the 10 northern tribes of Israel, who got taken away, deported, by the Assyrian Empire in 721 BC and never returned, except briefly during Josiah's reign, and left again. But it shows in 1st Kings chapter 17 that the Assyrians, as they were deporting the 10 northern tribes of Israel, replaced them with people they had deported from the region of the Caspian Sea and placed them in the northern area of Samaria and Galilee, north of the kingdom of Judah. This mixed multitude of people came to think of themselves as Israelite when they weren't. And the Jews knew it, and despised them immensely. And so, in their eyes, they were half-breed or worse, they were impure. Of course to the religious zealot in Jerusalem, I mean, the Gentile, if you got anywhere near a Gentile, you'd go home and bathe, if you touched one, you'd also burn your clothes. It was a big deal to a Jew. And here are the people in this northern area who are all around Gentiles, co-mingled with Gentiles, so they were looked down upon, and they were base in the eyes of those in Jerusalem. This is where the Messiah comes, and brings light. Charles Spurgeon said a century ago, "Our Lord courts not those who glory in their light, but those who pine in their darkness (cf. 1st Corinthians 1:26-29)." I mean, he doesn't set up camp in Jerusalem, he does minister there a bit, but mainly he's kind of standing toe-to-toe with the religious elite in Jerusalem. But he goes to those who are described as being in darkness, those in the shadow of death he sets up camp with, these people that would be considered in a hopeless state, and he brings hope. And that's just the ministry of Christ. In **verse 16**, it says, "**those who sat in darkness**", Isaiah chapter 9 actually says, "**those who walked in darkness**", and here it says "**those who sat in darkness**", as if to say they're even in a worse condition now. Those who "walked," now becomes those who "sat." I mean, they're in a pit of darkness, that's kind of the sense. It's almost as if man would say *'they're out of the reach of God.'* They were in a place where they're just a mess. But as we look through the Gospels, we should always remember that nobody's out of the reach of God. There's no place where a person can be where the power of God is not effective and reaching them and transforming their lives, in changing their lives, and giving them hope. It's just the real deal of the ministry of Jesus (order and

read **“UNBROKEN, A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption”** by Laura Hillenbrand).

Sharing The Gospel Message

Verse 17, From that time Jesus began to preach and say ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” Maybe you’ve heard that message before. If you glance back to chapter 3, very same words of John the Baptist, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” And so John was preaching the message, the Gospel message, and now the Messiah comes along and is preaching the very same message. This ministry of Jesus, there’s a message that goes with the ministry, and it’s a ministry I can be part of, and share the same message. John the Baptist was sharing this same message. And this message is not a message of prophetic gloom and doom alone, but the distinct message of salvation being offered to people in the here and now, through the acknowledgement and acceptance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, of his death, burial and resurrection, and that of asking Jesus to come into a person’s life, filling them with the Holy Spirit. It’s that simple. Bob Caldwell, now a Calvary Chapel pastor shared his testimony. It was fairly humorous, very powerful. He didn’t have an easy life, and for various reasons got heavy into drugs, in the drug culture of the 60s and 70s, was way out there. And one day he’s with a buddy, and they’re hitchhiking, vans’ broken down, got the long hair, they’re totally stoned out and drugged up, walking along and hitching a ride. Well these two clean-cut guys decide to pull over and pick them up. Turns out they were Christians, they decided to pick up these two hitchhikers. One of them even confesses to Bob and his friend, *“You know, we never pick up people like you, just so you know, we never do that. But God told us to pick you guys up.”* And so they were a little nervous, in fact, Bob told the story that one of the guys started to share about Jesus, and he was very nervous as he did. Bob said he and his friend are stoned, and they’re not getting it, you know, it’s just going over their heads. And so they pull up to a church, and this man actually says to them, *“Hey, would you like to come into church, and accept Christ?”* And Bob goes, *“Well, thanks, but no thanks, that’s OK.”* So Bob said that the man then said, *“Hey listen, can I just pray for you then?”* And he said, *“All right.”* So the man bowed his head and said, *“God would you reveal yourself.”* So Bob says he got out of the car, his friend gets out, and they go on their way. Like the next day, and as they’re coming down off their high, he has this

conviction all of a sudden that comes over him, and he says, *"I'm stopping today, I'm done with drugs."* And he turned to his friend and says, *"I actually began to witness to him, and I didn't know anything about the Bible."* He said to him, *"You know this guy Jesus, he's pretty cool, you know, you ought to get to know him."* He told this story were all his friends got arrested, and just one mess after another, and the two people actually just pick him up, and the one guy prays for him, and it changes his life. He's pastoring a church of 4,000 people today in Idaho. So, this message, the ministry of Christ includes a message, and it's a message that you and I can share, just sharing about Jesus. Now Mark when he quotes this in his Gospel, he adds a few words, he adds the words, **"The time is fulfilled, and believe in the Gospel,"** meaning when Jesus went out, he also said **"the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the Gospel."** Repent and believe, it's time. And if that was Jesus going around saying **"The time is at hand"** 2,000 years ago, **'Here I am, the Messiah is here, it is time to repent and believe,'** if he said that then, you can be sure all the more we should be saying that now. If you look around today, I hope you're having that sense now, I think I say it a lot, but I look around and I say, *"Man, the time is at hand, the time is at hand."* So all the more, the kingdom of God is at hand, he's gonna come soon. What is the Gospel? See <http://www.unityinchrist.com/misc/WhatIsTheGospel%20.htm>.

'Come Follow Me'

Verses 18-22, "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.' Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 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. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him." Now as you compare this with the other Gospels, you see that Matthew isn't necessarily going in chronological order, in fact it might get a little confusing, if you start putting the Gospels together. What's helpful is to get like in the back of your Bibles, some Bibles have a harmony of the Gospels, and you can put all the different passages together. It seems that Luke at this point is more going sequentially than

Matthew, Matthew is going topically, he's seeking to show certain things. So he's not necessarily following the sequence of events. Now, as you see there, Jesus is walking along the sea, he sees Simon, and he sees Andrew, and he calls them. If you were just reading Matthew, and sometimes maybe in the older movies of Christ, you get that sense they're out there fishing and Jesus just walks up and calls them and they follow him. But when you put the Gospels together you find out there was a lot more going on. Again there's this whole year that Matthew is being silent about. But during this year before, Jesus has actually met these guys before, he's been with them, spent time with them. You look at the Gospel of John, you look at Luke, and you kind of put the whole narrative together. In fact, in the Gospel of John, we learn that Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist. And so when John the Baptist was ministering, he had these disciples, and Andrew was one and another guy was there, probably John, the apostle John, and when he saw Jesus coming John the Baptist said, **"Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."** And so they went and spent some time with Jesus, Andrew and this other guy. And then Andrew says, *'Cool, this is the Messiah,'* and he believes. He then goes to Peter, as you read in the beginning of John. And so he introduces him, and then that's where, when Peter comes to Jesus, Jesus changes his name, and says ***'You're going to be called the rock. I'm changing your name from Cephas to Peter.'*** And together, they've spent some time with Jesus. And we don't know the reasons why, but Peter and Andrew have gone back to their fishing business and to their trade. And now at this particular time, Jesus comes to them, and says, ***"Come, follow me. I'll make you fishers of men."*** So they immediately now drop their nets and they follow him, Jesus. And also James and John at this point in time, he goes up to them too, and they're out there in the boat with their dad, mending their nets, and he says ***"Come follow me"***, so they also drop everything, and they follow Jesus. ***So, the ministry of Jesus, it's a powerful deal, but we also see that the ministry of Jesus includes a call to follow him.*** It doesn't matter what your vocation is, doesn't matter what you're doing. Before you hear the call of the Lord, when Jesus comes to you and you turn your heart to him, and he becomes the Lord of your life, there's a call to follow him, to follow him. What does it mean to follow him? These guys followed him, literally, they spent time with him, and they did things that he did. They were part of the things that he was part of, being a disciple, learning from him and learning more and more to live like him, and to have the heart and life that he does. That's what it is to

be a believer in Jesus. It isn't just to attend church and to enjoy Bible studies or Christian music, it's to follow Jesus, to follow him in your daily life. Do you follow him? Now these guys drop their nets. And it's not always true that when Jesus comes and says "follow me" that it's required for somebody to drop their nets, meaning their vocation. In their particular case, God was calling them also to a type of ministry where they had to drop their nets and move on, leave their vocations. In some instances Jesus comes, somebody comes to Christ, he says "Follow me, but follow me right where you are, in your job." Other's have jobs that go against the teachings of Jesus, and must quit and find other employment. I was in that boat, initially, when God called me. But Jesus is saying '*Now I want you to look at your job differently, in the midst of that company and that workplace, be a light of Christ. But also use your resources and all that to get the Gospel out. But stay in your trade.*' And sometimes God will come, he did that to me, I'd been a Christian for awhile, and then he came and said '*Drop your net, drop your trade, I've got a different plan, come follow me, I'm going to use you in a different way.*' Now the word "fishers of men," for centuries Greek and Roman philosophers had used that term to describe the work of a man who would seek to catch others by teaching and persuasion. So Jesus is actually using a thought, a phrase, that was common in the culture, '*fishers of men.*' Now, when he calls people to evangelism, he uses different pictures based upon what they're doing. At one time he uses the term of shepherd, the shepherd seeking the lost sheep. Another time he uses the farmer, the principle of the farmer, working in the harvest field, as in evangelism, going out into the harvest field and taking in the crop. Different pictures, different trades...And so the Lord when he calls us to do different things, man, it's amazing how he's prepared us, so often with the very abilities and trades we need. You know, working in engineering before, it actually was helpful today. In the last few years being here in New England, coming out with the radio station, God called me to get this old radio station on the air. I wouldn't have guessed it, but my engineering background was helpful for years as we redesigned that deal and worked it. I didn't know anything about radio, but I was able to use the principles of engineering thoughts and way of looking at things to get that station on the air and rebuild it. And even being analytical, when I come to Scriptures I study analytically. A lot of theologians had an analytical background, engineering background. You study, you look at the detail, you consider details. Well they left their nets, and

they immediately followed Jesus. Even family relationships, you have a picture here. It says in verse 21, it says they were with their father mending nets, he called them, **verse 21, “and immediately”, verse 22, “they left the boat and their father, and followed him.”** Now we’re not told how Zebedee is, now that two of his sons are leaving, I mean, they’re important to him, the work of the fishing business, these guys are his sons, they’re important to him. We don’t know anything about his heart and how he responded at this time. And there are stories of parents struggling with this. By the way, archaeologists have found a house in Jerusalem, a stone inscription for something that went to a house, not exactly sure, but it’s got the inscribed name of Zebedee on it, where he sold fish his fishing industry had caught up in Galilee. So it was a real successful business old Zebedee and his sons had going. This archaeological discovery lends some fascinating insight into just who was with Peter and Jesus in the courtyard of Caiaphas on the night in which Jesus was betrayed in John’s Gospel. It was probably John himself, the son of Zebedee, who would have been known by the high priest and his servants merely as the son of Zebedee, the fish-monger, from Zebedee’s fishing industry which owned property in Jerusalem for marketing fish. And there are people that have had to leave family, and the family is very upset [i.e. Ken Levitt’s family, Orthodox Jewish, when Ken accepted Jesus, Yeshua into his life, became a believer in Jesus Christ (see “Kidnapped For My Faith” by him)] I also know of a nice Italian man whom the Lord called, Lou, and he was a bag-man for the mob. He had to convince them he was really serious in that the Lord had called him to adhere to his religious beliefs more closely. You might say they gave him an “honorable discharge” from the mob, which is almost never done, and they allowed him to pursue his “religious pursuits.” Quite unusual circumstances this guy had to maneuver around. Spurgeon again, “In the service of Jesus, we’re not to be restrained by ties of kindred, he has a higher claim than a father or a husband.” [How did the apostle’s fisherman trade aid in their new trade as fishers of men? see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/wwcofg/wearesalt.htm> and <http://www.unityinchrist.com/wwcofg/Questions.htm> Jesus chose to enlist fishermen for a very wise reason. Only about two or three of the apostles were not fishermen.]

The Ministry Of Jesus—What Is It?

Verses 23-25, “And Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Then his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought to him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and he healed them. Great multitudes followed him---from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond Jordan.” So

he goes about Galilee. Now this is the first tour, you could say, of Jesus around Galilee. There’s actually three different ones. And this particular tour around Galilee, which is noted here, he has the four guys, the four fishermen. Later on, when he comes through a second time, he has 12 at that particular time, twelve disciples. And then the third time, he actually sends the disciples ahead of him, and he joins up with them later, they go two-by-twos around Galilee, and then he joins them later. Pastor Chuck Smith brings out as a comment in his special addition New King James Version Bible, “PREACHING, TEACHING, HEALING. Notice the three aspects of the ministry of Jesus. He was preaching (which is proclaiming the gospel to the lost), he was teaching (instructing the believers from the Scriptures), and he was healing (meeting the personal needs of the people). These three areas represent a balance of what the Church should be doing today. There are some churches where there is a lot of preaching but no teaching. Other churches are proud of their teaching, but they don’t reach out to the lost. Still other churches emphasize healing and meeting the material and emotional needs of the people [both within and outside the Body of Christ], but they neglect to give them the gospel, or to teach them the Word so they can grow. We need to balance these three elements of our ministries. We share the gospel with the lost through preaching and teaching the Word, while at the same time reaching them in practical ways to receive God’s healing in their lives.” That was Pastor Chuck Smith’s comment for these verses. As I have brought out in both the Mission Statement and Evangelism section of this site, **the gospel walks forward on two legs, 1) good works given to the lost in the name of Jesus** (i.e. Mission Aviation Fellowship, Samaritan’s Purse, LifeNets.org) **and 2) preaching the gospel of salvation to the lost** (i.e. the JESUS Film Project, and all the local evangelism projects a church or denomination may do). This is essentially repeated by Jesus in his famous statement to all believers, telling them what job he was giving them to do, found in Matthew 28:18-20, which basically states that we as believers are to preach the gospel

everywhere, around the world (through preaching and proclaiming the Gospel and through doing good works for the lost in the name of Jesus Christ), and then to teach everything he has taught us to those who respond to our preaching of the gospel (i.e. to those who now through our preaching have become believers and are now attending church). So, preaching and teaching and doing good works in the name of Jesus. And of course, Jesus as he preached the Gospel of salvation to those around him, also healed all the sick and infirm around him as well. His preaching of the Gospel included both preaching the Gospel message and reaching out to meet the needs of those around him who were in need. So his preaching of the Gospel truly did walk on two legs. Often these “two legs” of evangelism get separated into two separate ministries, one dealing with the actual proclamation of the Gospel, and the other, doing good works for those in need (in the name of Jesus Christ). Just so those doing the good works are absolutely and positively doing their works in the name of Jesus Christ, they are doing just as important a job of proclaiming the Gospel as those preaching it. Franklin Graham, one way or another, with tact, always makes sure Samaritan’s Purse does their good works “in the name of Jesus Christ.” see

http://www.unityinchrist.com/evangelism/samaritan_purse.htm.

And that’s the way we approach ministry, teaching to the believer. But we use other means especially to get out the gospel message, and that’s going to the nonbeliever, and sharing the simple gospel message. See

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/misc/WhatIsTheGospel%20.htm>.

But also healing. Jesus had three predominant aspects of his ministry, he taught, he preached, and he healed. See

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/wwcofg/wearesalt.htm>.

So there was the full, complete restoration that was happening. And in verse 25 it says great multitudes, the word in the Greek means “multitudes and multitudes, mobs and mobs, crowds and crowds.” Some scholars say that as many as 20,000 people were following him at certain times. And as they were around him, he would teach, and so they would receive the gospel. Most didn’t receive “new life” in the sense of conversion at this point, before that famous Pentecost recorded in Acts 2:1-47, not in the spiritual sense of being born-again with the Holy Spirit. And then, during these massive outdoor events Jesus was holding, they were bringing multitudes of people, all sorts of demon-possessed, those with sickness and epilepsy, and people that were just tormented. It says “various diseases and torments,” people just in such a state, and he would just touch and heal them, and he would just keep going. And it was very

powerful. And so as the word got out, more and more people just came and came and came, and the crowds got larger and larger, and he just kept going, healing, and healing, and healing, teaching, preaching, and people are getting life, life, and hope and hope, and sufferings are being relieved and there's just a sense of grace being brought into their lives. And that is the ministry of Christ. It is so effective for restoration, physical, spiritual, true restoration. And I would say it has to include both, the healing and reaching out to the poor in their needs, and the preaching. And today, in ministry, I mean it's the same deal, teaching and preaching, and healing, healing.

related links:

Bible prophecy proves Jesus of Nazareth was and is the Messiah. See,

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/prophecies/1stcoming.htm>

What is the true Gospel message? See,

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/misc/WhatIsTheGospel%20.htm>

One essential leg of evangelism that's often ignored. See,

http://www.unityinchrist.com/evangelism/samaritan_purs_e.htm

and,

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/evangelism/Short-TermMissions.htm>

and,

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/wwcofg/wearesalt.htm>

and, <http://www.unityinchrist.com/wwcofg/Questions.htm>