

The Light First Shines in Galilee

Promise: Jesus is the light that shines in the darkness and gives life

Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg

Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1-12; 1 Cor. 1:10-18; [Matthew 4:12-25](#)

(3rd Sunday after the Epiphany, 1/22/23)

The people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned. — v. 16

Lead In — Jesus' public ministry commences after His baptism in the Jordan River and as John the Baptist is arrested. It is then that he *withdrew into Galilee* and his public ministry begins in earnest. Is this when the light first shines? If you say it was shining at Bethlehem at his birth, I won't argue with you. If you say it was shining in the Temple when Jesus at age 12 astounded the teachers there, I won't disagree with you. But there is a real turning point and the beginning of His full-fledged ministry described in our Gospel Lesson...

I. The Significance of Beginning in Galilee

- A. The connection with our First Lesson in Isaiah 9...
- B. Withdrew? Jesus will eventually set His face toward...
- C. What does this say about where we do ministry? ...

II. One Of the Surprising First Actions Jesus Takes

- A. He chooses to work in and through people! ...
- B. In untypical fashion, Jesus chooses them...
- C. Jesus said, follow Me and I will make you fishers ...

III. Attraction Was Love, Message Remained the Same

- A. Message: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is...
- B. Rejection will happen, crowds wax and wane...
- C. Marketing and counting nickels and noses...

Parting Shot — Jesus, the Light of the world, shines in our darkness. And as our eyes adjust to seeing in this light, we need to take this light to dark places by bearing witness to Jesus. Don't be surprised that creatures of the night scurry from the light. We ourselves do this all the time and need to repent. It is painful for one's eyes to adjust to the light. But hiding, dimming, filtering, or coloring the light, no matter how well received, will not do the work of the authentic light. The only option is to move on with it. That light gives life!

Is 9:1-2 But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwell in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.

Mt 23:37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"

Ac 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Jn 2:23-25 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that

Matthew 4:12-25 ESV

Jesus Begins His Ministry

¹² Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee.

¹³ And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ¹⁵ "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— ¹⁶ the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned." ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

¹⁸ While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ 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. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³ And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. ²⁴ So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them. ²⁵ And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

he was doing. But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

Mt 28:19-20 "Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them ... teaching them."

Examples of fallow time... Chorazin & Bethsaida // Jerusalem // Jesus' training mission // Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens // many individuals

Lk 6:26 "Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets."

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