

## Marinating in God's Word: Matthew 4:12-17

Everyone starts somewhere, including the One who brings the Kingdom to us and through us.

For further reflection on your own or in a small group, consider these questions:

- As Jesus started his public ministry John the Baptist was being arrested, in a sense preparing that part of Jesus' way too. What do you suppose the impact was for Jesus? Occasionally we feel pressed for our faith, but compared to Christians in many places, we're hardly persecuted. Do you know anyone that is persecuted? What impact do the persecuted Christians have on us?
- Matthew often shows how Jesus' ministry fulfilled Old Testament prophecies, like this quote from Isaiah about Zebulun and Naphtali, which were tribal territories in what became Galilee. Matthew saw this as prophetic of where Jesus did most of his ministry. Galilee was a culturally and religiously mixed territory, and was seen as spiritually dark, compared to Jerusalem. Jesus focused on the most challenging territory and brought light to that darkness. How is our culture challenging, dark? What sort of light does Jesus bring to us and through us?
- Jesus proclaimed that with him the Kingdom had arrived. The people expected that to mean one thing, and Jesus meant something else. What did they expect? What did Jesus mean by the Kingdom he was bringing? How is the Kingdom tied to Jesus himself?
- What does it mean to live as a subject of the King? How does that make you a reflection of the Lord's light in the darkness of our culture?

Next week we will focus on Matthew 4:18-22.