



No Bait and Switch

Matthew 4:12-23 | Session 18.4

Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

Context

As you begin the session, ask the group to consider the question:

- What's the most important thing you'd put on your resume or CV? Why is that important to you, and why do you think it would be important to someone considering you for a job?

Now ask:

- Outside those things, what's something you feel you're really good at? How does it make you feel when you do that? Is it a "marketable" skill? Explain.
- Do you think God could use this particular skill? Why or why not?

Content

Read together Matthew 4:12-23, then watch the Bible Background Video and ask:

- What do we see Jesus doing in verses 12-17? Why might he have chosen to relocate as he begins his ministry?
- Examine the quote from Isaiah in verses 15-16. What might this “light” be that Matthew is associating with Jesus?
- Jesus’ message is simple in verse 17...or is it? How do you understand the word “repent?”
- What might Jesus have meant by saying the kingdom “has come near” (NIV)? What might be the “good news of the kingdom” mentioned in verse 23?
- Read verses 18-22 aloud again and imagine the scene. Have you heard this story before? Does anything new come to mind as you hear it this time?
- Do you find it surprising that these men would leave behind their livelihood and families to follow Jesus with just a couple of words? What might they have seen in Jesus that would make them make such a sudden but momentous decision?
- Why do you think Jesus use the image of fishing with these men? How might this have appealed to them in a way other invitations might not?
- What is the “good news of the kingdom” for these fishermen and others who choose to follow Jesus? Is it possible it can be more than one thing?

Closure

Close the session by leading a conversation using prompts like these:

- Think of some effective advertising plans. What makes them effective? At their heart, what are most advertisements telling us about ourselves?
- If the world is telling us we are somehow not enough, what might Jesus' message be?
- Imagine Jesus were to come to your workplace today. How might his invitation be different? What could your profession contribute to the kingdom of God?
- Refer to this quote from this week's Faithelement Conversations podcast: "There's nothing more powerful or beautiful, frankly, than a person who is being themselves." Do you agree? Why or why not?
- Why do you think we sometimes struggle to believe that God accepts us as we are?

Close with a prayer.

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