

Making Disciples with the Gospel of Matthew

Week of October 16-22 (Session 7) Readings and Reflection Questions

Friday, October 16, 2020 [Matthew 11:1-24](#)

1. Why do you think John the Baptist might have begun to have doubts about whether Jesus really was the one whose way he had prepared?
2. What qualitative difference was there in how the kingdom of heaven had been advancing since John baptized Jesus?
3. How did Jesus' methodology for advancing the kingdom of heaven differ from how King David had advanced God's kingdom?
4. Considering how controversial Jesus was in his day, and comparing to our own, which constituencies in America do you think would have the hardest time accepting Jesus?
5. Try to imagine what community life would have been like in the predominantly Jewish villages and towns on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. Do you think the streets would have been safe at night? Why would Jesus compare them unfavorably to Sodom?

Saturday, October 17, 2020 [Matthew 11:25-12:14](#)

1. Recall that Jesus had sent out his twelve apostles on 'mission trips' earlier ([10:1-7](#)). At what point in this narrative do you think they returned to Jesus?
2. What could it be about education that makes it difficult for the 'wise and learned' (v. 25) to perceive the things of God?
3. What does it say about the Father that he would be pleased to hide things from the 'wise and learned' while revealing them to children?
4. When the Pharisees accused Jesus of doing what was 'unlawful,' what code of conduct do you think they had in mind?
5. Why do you think the Pharisees became intent on killing Jesus after their arguments with him about the Sabbath?
6. How likely do you think it is that Jesus' statement, 'the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath,' was a claim to being equal with God?

Sunday, October 18, 2020 [Matthew 11:27, or 28-30](#)

1. When Jesus talks about knowing the Father, what kind of knowledge is he talking about?
2. Can you recall any experience(s) that might have involved receiving a 'revelation' from God?
3. Rest for your body is easy to understand; but what do you think is involved in rest for your soul?
4. How consciously do you try to balance work and rest in your life?
5. The metaphor of sharing Jesus' yoke involves two oxen, side by side, pulling together on one yoke, with one doing more of the work. What kinds of activities in your routine require yoke-sharing with Jesus, and what kind of activities not so much?

Monday, October 19, 2020 [Matthew 12:15-45](#)

1. Do you get any impression that Jesus sought out conflict with those who opposed him? Did Jesus shy away from conflict? How would you describe his 'rules of engagement?'

2. Which person of the Trinity is most associated with the coming of the Kingdom of God? Why is that significant?
3. Why do you suppose Jesus would say that blasphemy against the Son of Man is a less serious offense than blasphemy against the Spirit of God?
4. In Jesus' world view, can bad trees become good? If so, how do you think that happens?
5. What do you think it was about asking for a miraculous sign that was 'wicked and adulterous'? Were those who sought miraculous healing from Jesus also 'wicked and adulterous' (12:39)?
6. Why do you suppose a 'clean and orderly' life easily become host to more wicked demons than a merely demon possessed person (12:43-45)?

Tuesday, October 20, 2020 [Matthew 12:46-13:23](#)

1. What words would you use to describe the way Jesus spoke about his family (12:46-50)? If you said the same kind of thing to your family members as Jesus said to his, how would they react?
2. Do you think Jesus' natural family stuck around to hear his teaching of the parables after he had rebuffed them?
3. What would you identify as perhaps the greatest potential threat to your fruitfulness in the kingdom?
4. See if you can think of a person or two who fit each of the categories in the parable (seed on the path, rocky soil, thorny soil, good soil). How might this parable affect the way you might pray for each of them?
5. Did you notice anything in the reading from today you had not noticed before? What is God showing you?

Wednesday, October 21, 2020 [Matthew 13:24-52](#)

1. Some people reject God because it does not make sense to them that the One who is allegedly loving and powerful would also allow so much evil and suffering in the world. Do you think the parable of the weeds has anything to say to such an argument? If so, what?
2. How might the parable of the hidden treasure illustrate the relationship of the church to God's kingdom?
3. How might the parable of the net give clarity to the character and mission of the churches on earth?
4. How well do you see parables and analogies of God's work when you observe ordinary things in life?

Thursday, October 22, 2020 [Matthew 13:44](#)

1. Try to capture in one or two sentences what Jesus means by 'the kingdom of heaven,' as if you were going to explain it to a person who had never been to church and never heard the message of Christ.
2. In what concrete ways have you personally treasured the kingdom of heaven coming into your life? (Say a prayer of gratitude.)
3. Is there any extraneous stuff have you had to 'own' or deal with in order to have God's riches in your life?
4. How is God continuing to grow and shape you?