



*Jesus the King*  
*Matthew*

## **"The Parable of the Soils"**

## **Week 1**

Matthew 13:1-23

September 23, 2018

**Icebreaker question.** What are you most looking forward to between now and Christmas? (Let everyone answer)

**Prayer (now or end of study).** Spend some time updating one another on your summer and share prayers of need and praises of thankfulness.

**Studying the word.** *Ask God to guide your study of His Word.*

### **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS**

1. Have someone read the passage.
2. Survey the passage. What are the two settings in which Jesus speaks? Consider location and audience.
3. What are the differences in what he says to the crowds vs. the disciples?
4. Why does he communicate more detail to the disciples? (verses 11-14)
5. Jesus says that the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled. Look at Isaiah 6:8-13.
  - a. Put Isaiah 6:8-10 in your own words.
  - b. Until what happened was Isaiah to preach? Look at Isaiah 6:11-13. Who will remain faithful in the whole land?
  - c. What is the "seed" in Isaiah 6:13?
  - d. What does Isaiah's prophecy show us about Jesus' parable, and why he preaches in parables?
6. What does it mean their heart is dulled, their eyes closed, and their ears barely hear? What is the solution for this?
7. What are the two ultimate outcomes of the seeds sewn?
8. Why does Jesus go into detail about the various bad soils?

**QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION**

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this passage?
2. What do we learn about mankind in this passage?
3. What do we learn about the life that God desires for mankind?
4. Are there any of the bad soils that you are afraid you might be?  
How might you need to heed Jesus' warning?
5. Understanding this passage, are there any ways that your heart is moved to worship God?

## **"The Parable of the Weeds"**

## **Week 2**

Matthew 13:24-43

September 30, 2018

**Icebreaker question.** --- At this moment, what is the music or album that you are listening to the most?

**Prayer (now or end of study).** Has there been anything in the news that has happened recently that is worthy of prayer? Any personal requests? Let each person participate, and then pray.

**Studying the word.** *Ask God to guide your study of His Word.*

### **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS**

- Look at verse 31, 33, and 44. What is the main topic of this section of Scripture?
- A parable is a story that illustrates one main point. There are three parables in this section, so let's take a look at each.

#### The parable of the weeds.

- Notice how this parable is both before and after the other two parables. We will ask about why this is the case later.
- What do each of the following represent in this parable?
  - The man who sowed good seed.
  - The field.
  - The good seed.
  - The weeds.
  - The enemy.
  - The harvest.
  - The harvesters.
- What do the servants ask if they should do?
- What is the main idea of the parable of the weeds?

#### The parable of the mustard seed.

- What does it mean that it is the smallest, but it grows to be the biggest?

- What does it mean that the birds come and perch in its branches?

The parable of the yeast.

- What would happen if you worked yeast through sixty pounds of dough?
- What does this mean?
- Investigate Psalm 78, from which Jesus quotes in verse 35. Skim the passage, beginning, middle, and end. What is the main idea of this passage? How does it relate to these parables?

Putting it all together.

- What do these three parables have in common, and why are the two smaller ones sandwiched between the larger one and its explanation?

**QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION**

- Do you ever want to go and round up all the evil people and get rid of them? What does Jesus say? Why do you think he gives that answer?
- Jesus talks about the end of time, and the separation of the wheat and the weeds. How does that shape the way you should live today?
- Do Jesus' parables, which illustrate slow and steady growth from obscurity to pervasiveness, give you hope today? How? Why?

## **"Parables of the Kingdom"**

## **Week 3**

Matthew 13:44-58

October 7, 2018

**Icebreaker question.** --- How do you like to celebrate your birthday?

**Prayer (now or end of study).** Pray for the greater St. Louis Metro area. Pray for unity, peace, mission, revival. Pray for an end to homicides, for stability in homes. Pray for an end to racism in its various forms. Pray for economic development and job creation. Pray for police officers and the justice system. Pray for those in leadership at various levels.

**Studying the word.** *Ask God to guide your study of His Word.*

### **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS**

- Have someone read today's passage.
- Thinking thematically, divide this passage into two halves. At what verse would you start the second half? Why?
- How many parables does Jesus give in these verses? This is kind of a trick question!
- What similarities do you see in the parable about the treasure hidden in the field, the pearl of great price, and the parable of the fish? What differences?
- What explanation does Jesus give about the parable of the fish?
- What does the parable about the scribe have in common with the others? What differences? What is the point?
  - *\*Note\** the word "scribe" to describe the disciples is very unexpected. A scribe was a student of the Mosaic law.
- Now look at verses 53-58. What point is Matthew illustrating with these verses?

- What do the people acknowledge to be true about Jesus? Consider especially verse 54.
- How does this section relate to the previous parables?
- Do you have any questions about this passage? Any observations or ideas?

### **QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION**

- Think about what you consider to be your greatest treasure. Is it the kingdom of God? Is it Jesus? Are there ways you need to repent?
- How would you put into words why you think Jesus or God's kingdom is the treasure worth sacrificing everything to get? How would you say that to your unbelieving friend?
- Imagine what a community of believers could do if they all, together, were actively treasuring Jesus as the highest of all. What might they start to do and prioritize?
- Should we be surprised when people reject the kingdom? Why or why not?

## **"Jesus Feeds the Five-Thousand"                      *Week 4***

Matthew 14:13-21

October 14, 2018

**Icebreaker question.** --- What did you want to be when you were little?

**Prayer (now or end of study).** Spend some time praying for those you know who are weary and need perseverance. Pray for anyone who is downtrodden, discouraged, or chewed up by life, and anyone else you may want to pray for.

**Studying the word.** *Ask God to guide your study of His Word.*

### **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS**

- Have someone read the passage.
- Describe the scene according to verses 13-15.
- Why does Jesus tell them "You give them something to eat?" in verse 16?
- What may be significant about the number of loaves of bread left over, the number 12?
- ***Making the connection....*** Can you think of any other time when a great leader of God's people had a large number of hungry people in a desolate place, and fed them miraculous bread?
  - In Moses' case, who sent the bread? Exodus 16:4.
  - In this story, who made the bread?
  - What point(s) is Matthew making with this story?
- Does this passage teach that God is the one who will provide for his people? Why or why not?
- Do you have any thoughts or questions about this passage?

**QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION**

- God is making a new people for himself through Jesus Christ. Why is this new development for the people of God important to understand?
- Are there any ways that you find yourself hungry, spiritually, literally, or otherwise? Are there any ways that you would like to see God take care of you? How does this passage give you hope?
- What do we learn about God in this passage?
- What do we learn about man in this passage?
- What do we learn about the life that God desires for man in this passage?

## **"Jesus Walks on Water"**

## **Week 5**

Matthew 14:22-33

October 21, 2018

**Icebreaker question.** --- Who is your favorite comic strip character? (or your favorite comic strip?)

**Prayer (now or end of study).** Let us spend some time praying for missionaries. Pray for any you know personally, and also pray for those supported by our church. Consider praying for different regions of the world.

**Studying the word.** *Ask God to guide your study of His Word.*

### **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS**

- Describe the scene from verses 22-24.
- Imagine seeing Jesus walking on the sea like verse 25. How would you react?
- How did the disciples react?
- Note: The phrase "it is I" from verse 27 is the same phrase used of God in the burning bush when God said his name was, "I AM."
- How are the words "fear, afraid, terrified" woven throughout this event?
- What does Jesus do when Peter doubts and is afraid?
- What do you think is the tone of his voice when he says, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"
- The disciples began crying out with fear. How do they end?
- Do you have any other thoughts, questions, or observations about this passage?

### **QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION**

- Who do you say Jesus is? Do you worship him as the Son of God?

- Is there a step of faith that you are afraid to make? What is it?
- What promises does Jesus make as you step out in faith?

## **"Tradition Versus the Word"**

## **Week 6**

Matthew 15:1-20

October 28, 2018

**Icebreaker question.** --- Would you rather be an expert cook or a savant at playing the piano?

**Prayer (now or end of study).** Pray for the community around us. Pray that God would send the Gospel from our church to the north, south, east, and west. Pray that God would move hearts and send revival.

**Studying the word.** *Ask God to guide your study of His Word.*

### **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS**

- Have someone read the passage aloud.
- What issue do the Pharisees have with Jesus and his followers?
- What is Jesus' response?
- Jesus quotes from Isaiah 29:13. Read Isa 29:13-16.
  - What do we learn about what God will do in Isa. 29:13-14?
  - What do we learn about the hearts of the people in verse 15?
  - What do we learn about the attitude of the Pharisees' in verse 16?
- How does Jesus explain the real point of hand washings? Make sure you have verse 20 in view as you answer.

### **QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION**

- Are there man-made traditions that we hold that keep us from God? Why do we make up our own traditions and take them more seriously than God's Word?

- Jesus says what comes out of a person is what defiles them. Is there any way you need to change what you do or say?
- Jesus calls the Pharisees blind guides. How can you make sure you listen to the right voices when you are learning about God?

## **"The Canaanite Woman Believes"      **Week 7****

Matthew 15:21-28

November 4, 2018

**Icebreaker question.** --- What author, star, musician or artist have you spent hours learning about?

**Prayer (now or end of study).** Let us lift one another up in prayer. Share worries, concerns, needs, or anything else going on.

**Studying the word.** *Ask God to guide your study of His Word.*

### **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS**

- This is a very difficult passage! Have someone read it.
- Jesus was in Tyre and Sidon, Gentile regions. Describe the scene from verses 21-24.
- In verse 25, what does the woman further do to get Jesus' attention?
- How does Jesus respond? Was being called a dog a good thing?
- How does the woman respond? What does her persistence indicate about her belief in Jesus?
- Look at verse 22 and how she asks for mercy. What is mercy? Why should we have God's mercy in view when we make our requests to God?
- Do you have any other thoughts, questions, or observations about this passage?

### **QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION**

- Is your attitude in prayer one of asking for mercy, or asking for your due? How could your attitude before God be more like that of the Canaanite woman?
- When Jesus does something in the Gospels, or perhaps in your life, that violates your sensibilities, how should you respond?

- What is the role of persistence in your relationship with God? Is it disrespectful to continually come to God with the same request?
- Is there something that you used to ask God for, that you gave up on, that you need to go back to God and keep asking for?
- Are there any ways you need to humble yourself before the King, Jesus?

## **"Jesus Predicts His Death"**

## **Week 8**

Matthew 16:13-28

November 11, 2018

**Icebreaker question.** --- What has been the highlight of the year for you so far?

**Prayer (now or end of study).** Pray for the United States of America in every possible way that you can imagine or think of.

**Studying the word.** *Ask God to guide your study of His Word.*

### **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS**

- Have someone read today's passage.
- What stands out to you in this passage?
- What is exceptional about the way Peter answers Jesus' question?
- Jesus promises several things to Peter here. Discuss what each means. I recommend paying attention to the sermon on this passage, and also reading online. Remember that when a given passage is unclear, going to other places in the Bible is OK in helping to understand.
  - "On this rock I will build my church."
  - "I will give you keys to the kingdom of heaven."
  - "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven."
  - "Whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."
- (Verses 21-23) Why does Jesus rebuke Peter? What does that indicate about Peter's misunderstanding of Jesus' mission?
- (Verses 24-28) What are the discipleship implications of Jesus' death and resurrection?
- Any other questions or observations you have from this passage?

**QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION**

- Do you believe there is any authority in the church, in its pastors, elders, or congregation assembled? What did Jesus teach?
- Are you willing to lose your life for Jesus?
- What are ways that this world tells us to gain the whole world, yet we would lose our soul?
- How can we teach our children that it is worth it to lose our lives for Jesus?

## **"The Transfiguration"**

## **Week 9**

Matthew 17:1-13

November 18, 2018

**Icebreaker question.** --- If you could eliminate one thing from your daily schedule, what would it be?

**Prayer (now or end of study).** Pray for the Gospel to go to the ends of the world. Pray for unreached peoples and those without the Gospel, that they may hear and believe. Pray God would raise up laborers.

**Studying the word.** *Ask God to guide your study of His Word.*

### **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS**

- Have someone read the passage aloud.
- What happens to Jesus in this passage? What is the significance of it?
- Describe Peter's reaction to Jesus' change in appearance.
- Notice that God interrupts Peter from the cloud! What do you think about that?
- How do the disciples react to God's voice?
- What does Jesus do to comfort the disciples?
- In verses 9-13, how does the setting change? How does the tone change? How does the content change?
- What is the point of verses 9-13? How is this a contrast to the previous section? What theological point is Matthew making?
- Peter gives the authoritative interpretation of this passage in his letter, 2 Peter 1:16-21.
  - When Peter thinks about his time on the mountain, he is encouraged to remember that he has something "more sure" than that experience. What

is more sure than being present for the transfiguration? (2 Peter 1:19).

- Do you have any other thoughts, questions, or observations about this passage?

### **QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION**

- Does your understanding of Jesus include him being glorious, powerful, with a face that shines like the sun? Or do you picture him like a common picture on a wall, with a subdued (hopefully not but sometimes effeminate) face, carrying a lamb, etc. Now that Jesus is glorified, what does he look like?
- God says, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him." How can you listen to Jesus more intently this week? (2 Peter 1:19-21)
- How would your life change if you believed that the path to glory meant taking on servanthood and suffering?

## **"Faith Like a Mustard Seed"**

## **Week 10**

Matthew 17:14-21

November 25, 2018

**Icebreaker question.** --- What is your worst travel experience?

**Prayer (now or end of study).** Pray for people in our community who are lonely. Pray for those who are depressed, going through separation or divorce, or any other sort of difficulty you can think of.

**Studying the word.** *Ask God to guide your study of His Word.*

### **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS**

- Have someone read the passage aloud.
- What is man's son's situation?
- What does Jesus say about the current generation?
- How is Jesus feeling about his time on earth with mankind?
- Why couldn't the disciples cast out the demon?
- Many times, in the Gospel of Matthew, we have seen Jesus not do miracles because of the lack of faith or do miracles because of faith. Have a person read the following passages: Matthew 9:22, Matthew 13:58, Matthew 14:31, Matthew 15:28. (There are others).
  - What does Jesus teach here about the quantity of faith needed?
  - What does Jesus teach here about the object of a person's faith (meaning, what a person puts their faith in)?
- Think about it. Why is it true that a small amount of faith can do the impossible?
- Do you have any other thoughts, questions, or observations about this passage?

**QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION**

- What do we learn about man in this passage?
- What do we learn about God in this passage?
- What do we learn about the life that God desires for man to have in this passage?
- Are there any ways that you are struggling to believe in God right now?
- Close by praying for each other's faith. If anyone needs encouragement in their walk with God, commit to encouraging one another in the time until small groups start up again.