

**Women in the Word**  
**Matthew 11:1–12:50**

*February 22, 2018*



1. Read Matthew 11:1-6 along with Matthew 3:1-10. What was John’s primary message for Israel according to Matthew 3:2? Thinking back through what we’ve studied so far, who has heeded his message? Who has not heeded his message?

In addition to being unjustly imprisoned, what other disappointments do you think John might be facing? How might his plight have led this man of faith to question Jesus?

Look again at Jesus’ response to John’s question in Matthew 11:4-6. What evidence does Jesus present to bolster John’s faith?

Please share a personal experience or evidence from Scripture that you rely on to strengthen your faith when doubt arises.

2. Read Matthew 11:7-19. Jesus declared John the Baptist to be the greatest of all men. Why was this true? Also read Luke 1:13-17 and John 1:32-36.

Despite John being the greatest among men, Jesus declares that even the “least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” How did Jesus expect the lost to respond to His proclamation of the gospel?

What are a few of God’s promises for those who are part of His kingdom? See John 1:12; 3:16; 10:10 and 14:27.

3. Read Matthew 11:20-24. Tyre and Sidon were gentile cities. Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum were Jewish cities along the Sea of Galilee where Jesus performed many miracles. Why did Jesus criticize these Jewish cities?

How does the phrase “the greater the revelation, the greater the responsibility” apply to this passage? See verse 20.

4. Read Matthew 11:25-30. Jesus thanks God the Father for revealing truth about Himself and God’s kingdom to those with humility and faith. What truth about Jesus’ authority is emphasized in verse 27a?
5. Read Matthew 11:28-30 again slowly. What is Jesus encouraging His followers to do? What does He tell us will be the outcome as that happens?

What might Jesus’ promise of rest for your soul personally look like for you?

What are some ways you can take the yoke of Jesus, rather than the yoke of the world upon your shoulders today? Take a moment to talk with the Lord about this right now.

6. Read Matthew 12:1-14. What activities of Jesus and His disciples did the Pharisees condemn? According to verses 10 and 14, what was the true motive behind their criticism?

What truths did the Pharisees fail to understand about God’s Law? See verses 7 and 12.

By what authority did Jesus interpret the Law? See verse 8 along with Matthew 28:18.

7. Read Matthew 12:15-21. What does God say about His Son in this prophecy from Isaiah?

According to the prophecy, what will Jesus do on behalf of the Gentiles?

8. Read Matthew 12:22-37. Contrast the response of Jesus' followers with the response of the Pharisees when Jesus healed the demon-possessed man.

Why did Jesus condemn the response of the Pharisees so strongly in verses 31-32? See verses 24 and 28.

What was in the heart of the Pharisees according to verse 34?

9. Read Matthew 12:38-45. How did the men of Nineveh react to Jonah's preaching?

Throughout chapter 12, what has been the response of the Pharisees to Jesus, who is greater than Jonah?

10. In light of these positive and negative examples of responding to God's Word, what are some ways we can display "good fruit" in our lives?

11. Read Matthew 12:46-50. Jesus calls us His family when we become part of His kingdom! Write out a praise to God based on these verses.

12. Write out your personal prayer request in a few words to share with your small group.

**Women in the Word**  
**Matthew 13:1-58**

*March 1, 2018*



1. Matthew 13 opens with Jesus having a rough day in His ministry. Look back at Matthew 12, specifically verses 14 and 24, and record the opposition Jesus was experiencing.

Read Matthew 13:1-2. What did Jesus do to find rest?

2. A large crowd followed Jesus to the sea and He used a series of seven parables to teach them about the kingdom of heaven. The word “parable” is from the root word “paraballo.” “Para” means “to come alongside or compare” and “ballo” means “to see.” With this in mind, write your own definition of the word “parable.”

Read Matthew 13:10-17, 34-35. Explain why Jesus used parables to teach the people about the kingdom of heaven.

3. The Parable of the Sower is recorded in Matthew 13:3-9 and explained in verses 18-23. Unlike the other parables recorded in Matthew 13 that begin with the phrase “The kingdom of heaven is like,” the Parable of the Sower instead describes how the kingdom of heaven begins. Read Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23. How does the kingdom of heaven begin?

What does the seed represent?

What do each of the soils represent?

Hard path –

Rocky soil –

Thorny soil –

Good soil –

Why do you think a seed is used to illustrate God’s Word in this parable? Look at Hebrews 4:12 for insight.

4. According to Matthew 13:23, what is the result of one's salvation? Look at 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Galatians 5:22-24 for further insight.
5. The Parable of the Sower teaches that God's Word is truth. The message would remain the same, but the results would differ according to the heart in which it was planted. What does Mark 16:15 say about sharing the gospel?

How will the Parable of the Sower affect your sharing of the gospel?

6. The Parable of the Sower reveals how Satan attacks the planting of God's Word, but the next three parables in Matthew 13 are used to illustrate how Satan attacks the work of the kingdom of heaven. Read Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43. How does the illustration of the seed in the Parable of the Weeds differ from the seed in the Parable of the Sower?

Who is sowing the good seed in the Parable of the Weeds?

7. According to verses 25-26, what other kind of seed was planted and who planted it? What were the results of these seeds being planted?

What does Jesus say to do with the weeds in verses 28-30?

8. Read Matthew 13:38-43 along with 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10 and explain the future harvest that Jesus is describing in the Parable of the Weeds.

9. Continue by reading the Parable of the Mustard Seed and the Parable of the Leaven recorded in Matthew 13:31-33. Because these two parables are not explained by Jesus, there are several different interpretations. How could the Parable of the Mustard Seed be an encouragement to the disciples?

How could it also be a warning?

10. To better understand the Parable of the Leaven, look at Matthew 16:6, 11-12. What does the leaven represent in these verses?

Knowing this, explain how the kingdom of heaven is affected by the “leaven.”

11. Read the next three parables recorded in Matthew 13:44-50. Who or what does the treasure represent in verse 44? Look at Exodus 19:5-6 and Psalm 135:4 for insight.

What one word stands out to you in Matthew 13:44 and why?

It is widely believed that the pearl in Matthew 13:45-46 represents the Church. Read Romans 5:8 and describe the merchant and how he purchased the pearl (the Church).

In the Parable of the Net, the kingdom of heaven is compared to a dragnet that is thrown out into the water to catch a variety of fish. According to Matthew 13:47-50, how does the dragnet represent the end of the age?

12. Read Matthew 13:51-52. This is the final parable in this chapter of Matthew. Jesus describes the disciples as scribes. A scribe is one who records, interprets and teaches the Scriptures, and a disciple is a follower and student. Explain how a disciple is to be both a teacher and a student.

13. Finish by reading Matthew 13:53-58. How can our familiarity with Jesus be a good thing? How can it be a bad thing?

14. Which of the parables in Matthew 13 revealed a new or different truth to you? Please explain.

15. Write out your personal prayer request in a few words to share with your small group.

**Women in the Word**  
**Matthew 14:1–15:39**

*March 8, 2018*



1. After reading Matthew 14:1-12, describe Herod's role in the death of John the Baptist.

When Herod hears of Jesus' ministry in verses 1-2, to what conclusion does he jump?

2. In Matthew 14:13-21, Jesus performs one of His most famous miracles. What words come to mind when you think of Jesus interacting with the crowds who follow Him?

What concern do the disciples voice in verse 15?

Jesus responds to them with a command in verse 16. What insight does He give them into their future with His words, "you give them something to eat"? Read Jeremiah 3:15 and John 21:15-17.

Describe the role that each party plays in this miracle:

The disciples –

Jesus –

The crowd –

As you look back at this miracle, how does it encourage you to step into situations that may seem impossible or overwhelming?

3. After this remarkable miracle, what action does Jesus take in Matthew 14:22-23?

What wisdom do you glean from His example?

4. Read Matthew 14:24-33 carefully and answer to the following questions:

What is Jesus' reaction to the disciple's fear?

In what way is Peter's response unique?

How does Jesus respond to Peter's fear?

What do the disciples discern from this encounter?

What are some lessons you take away from this miracle?

5. After landing on the other side of the lake, Jesus is recognized. Read Matthew 14:34-36. What actions of the people reveal their confidence in His power and His person?

Share some ways your life can show your confidence in Jesus to those around you.

6. Read Matthew 15:1-20. What are the scribes and Pharisees implying about Jesus and His disciples in verses 1-2? Read Mark 7:1-5.

According to Jesus in Matthew 15:3-9, what should the religious leaders be more concerned about than religious tradition? Read Psalm 78:35-37 and Matthew 23:25-26.

7. Read Matthew 15:10-20. Who raises concerns about the Pharisees as Jesus continues teaching? What is their issue?

What wisdom does Jesus give them concerning the Pharisees in verses 13-14?

8. According to Jesus, what is the difference between what goes into a person's mouth and what comes out of a person's mouth? Read Matthew 12:34 and Luke 6:45.
  
9. Read the story of Jesus and the gentile Canaanite woman in Matthew 15:21-28. What stands out to you in this story?

How does Jesus explain His indifference to the woman's plea in verse 24?

As she pleads with Jesus, with what name does she address Him?

Where do you see evidence of the woman's faith, despite being a Gentile or non-Jew? How does Jesus respond to her faith?

10. Compare Matthew 15:29-39 with Matthew 14:13-21. What similarities do you see? What differences?

The 4,000 followers in Matthew 15:32-39 are likely Gentiles. Just as He did with the 5,000 Jewish followers in Matthew 14, Jesus readily feeds them. What do we learn about the grace of God in these verses? Read John 10:16 and Romans 9:24-26.

11. In Matthew chapters 14 and 15, Jesus has tirelessly met people's needs as they followed Him. Think about your relationship with Jesus and share some ways He tirelessly meets your needs as you follow Him every day.
  
12. Write out your personal prayer request in a few words to share with your small group.

**Women in the Word**  
**Matthew 16:1–17:23**

*March 15, 2018*



1. Read Matthew 16:1-4. While many needy and infirmed people approach Jesus for miraculous healings, the Pharisees and Sadducees have a different goal. What do they ask Jesus to do, and what do we learn about their motives from verse 1?

When Jesus refuses to comply, what reasoning does He give and how does He describe those who are testing Him?

Jesus tells them in verse 4 that only one sign will be given to them. Read Matthew 12:40 and describe this sign.

2. There can be a fine line between bringing our needs to Jesus and testing Jesus with a demand. Read 1 John 5:14 and record the truth that helps us distinguish between the two.

Consider any requests you are currently taking to Jesus and record how you might ensure that your prayer is not a demand or test.

3. Read Matthew 16:5-12. How does Jesus warn His disciples in verses 5-6?

Considering leaven's effect on dough, what can the disciples learn about the nature of false teaching?

Jesus expresses frustration with the smallness of the disciples' faith. What do you observe in this account that looks like little faith?

4. Read Matthew 16:13-20. Correcting the general misconception about Jesus' identity, what does Peter proclaim about Jesus in verse 16?

Look carefully at Jesus' response in verse 17. What does Jesus explicitly state about His lineage and His home?

5. Matthew 16:18 is the first New Testament reference to the Church. Based on confessing Jesus Christ as Lord, individuals are bound together in God's household, the Church. Read Ephesians 2:19-22 and record the part that each of the following people have in the building up of the Church.

The apostles and prophets –

Christ Jesus –

Individual members –

6. Read Matthew 16:21-28. Verse 21 marks a turning point in Jesus' preparation of His disciples. From this verse, list the important events that Jesus foretells as a part of God's kingdom plans.

Peter's bold faith shrinks in response to this news. How does Jesus correct him?

Have you ever resisted God because His plans for you seemed too unpleasant? Share with your group what you learned from that experience. What truth from Matthew 6:33 can you use in circumstances like these?

In Matthew 16:24, Jesus lists three things required of any true disciple of His. List each of those things and describe what each one looks like in your life.

7. Read Matthew 17:1-13. Jesus' appearance dramatically changed and His glory appeared in the presence of Peter, James and John. Describe Jesus' appearance and compare it to the glory of God revealed in Exodus 24:17.

After seeing visual signs of Jesus' deity, it is confirmed by the voice of God. From Matthew 17:5, list the two things God says about Jesus and God's instruction for the disciples.

8. This glorious revelation is followed by more references to Jesus' future suffering. What does Jesus predict in Matthew 17:9, 12?

In spite of that grim reminder, what might the disciples have learned from the transfiguration that would bring them hope for the future?

9. When we experience suffering or unwanted circumstances in our own lives, what truths about Jesus and His kingdom give us hope?
10. Read Matthew 17:14-23. Describe the boy's symptoms and the remedy that was attempted but failed.

Read Matthew 10:1, 8 and record how Jesus had prepared His disciples for this encounter.

11. Jesus identifies a demon as the cause of the boy's suffering and swiftly casts it out. According to Jesus, why were the disciples unable to do this?

What do you think may have contributed to their small faith?

12. One additional time Jesus prepares His disciples for His suffering and resurrection in Matthew 17:22-23. Compare the disciples' response in verse 22 to Peter's initial response in Matthew 16:22.

13. Write out your personal prayer request in a few words to share with your small group.

**Women in the Word**  
**Matthew 17:24–19:30**

*March 22, 2018*



1. What were some of your earliest views of what it meant to be a Christian that you now realize were not accurate?

How did you come to a better understanding of the true doctrines of Christianity?

2. Read Matthew 17:24-27. Every Jewish male over 20 years old was expected to pay a tax each year to help support the temple. Explain the analogy Jesus uses to teach Simon that He and His disciples were exempt from paying this tax.

Why did Jesus pay the tax anyway?

What does Titus 3:1 teach us about being subject to authorities in our lives?

3. Children were not esteemed when Christ walked the earth, but Jesus had a different opinion. Read the following verses and record what you learn about Jesus' view of children.

Matthew 18:1-6

Matthew 18:10-14

Matthew 19:13-15

4. Read Matthew 18:1-4 again. The disciples were guilty of misguided thinking in this story. What wrong impression can we deduce the disciples held regarding God's kingdom?

What did they learn from Jesus here?

What would they learn from Jesus later? Read Luke 22:24-26.

5. Read Matthew 18:5-9. Jesus speaks here of the temptations in the world. Where do they come from according to His words?

What should be our attitude toward temptations when we consider their power in our lives?

What great promises do we have from above? Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 and 2 Peter 2:9.

6. Read Matthew 18:15-20. Make a list of the steps that should be taken when one believer sins against another believer.

What is the wisdom in following this timeline?

What is the goal of taking these actions? Read Galatians 6:1.

7. Jesus continues His teaching on forgiveness in Matthew 18:21-35. What must be our main reason for forgiving those who sin against us? Also read Ephesians 4:32.

How would you compare the behavior of the king with the behavior of his servant?

How would you compare the behavior of our King with our behavior? Read Colossians 2:13-14.

8. Read Matthew 19:1-9. Jesus quotes the book of Genesis in these verses. What do we learn about God's original intent for marriage from the book of Genesis?

In what ways has our society strayed in attitude and action from God's original design for marriage?

9. Read Matthew 19:10-12. Both married and unmarried are used by God to further the work of His kingdom. List some of the serving possibilities that might uniquely exist for those who are married and the unique opportunities for those who are single.

What does Paul teach us in 1 Corinthians 7:17 regarding the variety of paths that believers may walk?

How does this agree with Jesus' words in Matthew 19:11 after the Jews wondered if it is best not to marry at all?

10. Read Matthew 19:16-22. Where does this young man seem to be placing his hope for receiving eternal life?

What does Jesus immediately let this man know about goodness in verse 17?

Jesus knows the problem in this young man's life that keeps him from following God fully. What is it?

What command was he not able to obey? Read Exodus 20:3.

11. Read Matthew 19:23-26. What might be some of the reasons it is difficult for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven?

12. Read Matthew 19:27-30. Unlike the rich young ruler, Peter and the disciples had left everything to follow Jesus. Jesus did not rebuke Peter for asking about their reward. Instead, what amazing reward awaits the disciples according to Jesus?

What truth does Jesus speak here that the young man earlier would not accept? What riches would have awaited him?

13. Write out your personal prayer request in a few words to share with your small group.