

Journey Through the New Testament

Matthew 15-19

Series: God's Assumptions ***"The Kingdom Among Us"*** ***1-27-19***

Introduction

As the disciples traveled the country side with Jesus, they encountered all types of people in need and witnessed Jesus' response to each. They saw his miraculous power to heal, to cast out demons, to multiply bread and fish to feed thousands, and they saw him transformed into a shining presence along with Moses and Elijah. The disciples followed sometimes in trust and sometimes in fear. At times they understood Jesus' teaching and at times, they missed the point entirely. Confusion, fear, and grief intruded upon them as they tried to understand, to believe, and to trust who Jesus was and what he was calling them to do and to be.

In each encounter, misunderstanding, teaching and miracle, Jesus demonstrated the kingdom of God. Everything he said and did flowed from who he was, the Son of God, Jesus—the Christ. Jesus was never caught off guard, never out of line, and never compromising of the Father's will.

Through his power and grace, the disciples would eventually be empowered to perform miracles and boldly speak the truth of the gospel, but it started as two steps forward and one step back.

As you journey through the New Testament, pay attention to Jesus' mercy, love, and compassion in every encounter as well as his savvy handling of those who opposed him. Note the struggles of the disciples and be encouraged to see that through all their ups and downs, they grew in faithful obedience, and Jesus never gave up on them.

Bible Study Selected verses from Matthew 16, 17, 19 (CEB)

Lesson Notes: Divide into groups of two or three people and assign each small group one of the following passages from Matthew. Ask the groups to review the passage and identify the issue(s) the disciples were grappling with in each scenario. (Ex: misunderstanding, confusion, fear, grief, protecting or defending Jesus...)

The kingdom among us...

- a. *Yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees, 16:5-12*
- b. *Peter's declaration about Jesus, 16:13-20*
- c. *Jesus' Transformation, 17:1-13*
- d. *Healing of a boy who was demon possessed, 17:14-23*
- e. *Jesus blesses children, 19:13-15*

Lesson Notes: Regroup and briefly share the following as a whole group.

What

1. What was going on in the passage you read?
2. What words describe the reactions, emotions or responses of the disciples?
3. What instruction/teaching/correction does Jesus give in each scenario?

So What

1. So, what do these passages reveal to us about the disciples? About Jesus?
About the process of becoming a disciple?

Now What

1. What do you relate to as you study the disciples?
2. Now, how are you challenged in your faith as you see Jesus in these scriptures?
3. Now, what will you do in order to become a more faithful follower of Christ?

Lesson Notes: As you read the scripture each day, keep in mind that these aren't just "Bible stories." Each passage is revealing something about God, Jesus, the kingdom of heaven, human nature, and God's divine purposes unfolding through people in the realm of time, yet conveying timeless truth. Listen for God to speak into your life.

Closing Reflection

It ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it is the parts that I do understand. Mark Twain