

The King's Way
Matthew 14-20
Participants Handout

The King's Way – Study 1
Matthew 14:1-36 – The One True King

1. What do people look for in a leader?

Read Matthew 14.

2. From verses 1-12, how would you describe Herod?

6. What do we discover about Jesus from verses 22-33?
(See also Job 9:1-8 and Psalm 89:8-9)

7. What is your impression of Peter and the other
disciples from these verses? In what ways can you
relate to him/them?

8. What do we discover about Jesus from verses 34-36?

9. What particularly stands out to you about Jesus from this chapter of Matthew's Gospel?

10. In what ways has this chapter of Matthew's Gospel confirmed, clarified, or challenged your understanding of what it means to trust and follow Jesus?

The King's Way – Study 2
Matthew 15:1-16:12 – The King for All

1. Think about two broad groups of people – the religious and the non-religious. Which group do you think faces the more significant obstacles in coming to faith in Jesus? Which group might find it easier to come to faith in Christ? Why?

Read Matthew 15:1-20.

2. What problem do these religious leaders have with Jesus and his disciples?

3. How would you sum up Jesus' initial response to their objection (verses 3-9)?

4. In what ways might we also be in danger of what Jesus is condemning here?

5. How does Jesus go on to use this occasion as an opportunity to teach the crowd?

Read Matthew 16:1-12.

6. What approach to Jesus does this group of religious leaders take?

7. What is Jesus' warning to ...

i) The Pharisees and Sadducees?

ii) His disciples?

8. Why might we also need to heed Jesus' warnings?

9. In between these two encounters with the religious leaders, Jesus provides for a surprising group of people. For each, reflect on what we discover about: (a) Jesus; and (b) trusting and following Jesus?

i) The Canaanite woman (15:21-28)

ii) The non-Jewish crowd healed (15:29-31)

iii) The non-Jewish crowd fed (15:32-39;
cf Mark 7:31)

10. What particularly stands out to you about Jesus from today's section of Matthew's Gospel?

11. In what ways has today's section of Matthew's Gospel confirmed, clarified, or challenged your understanding of what it means to trust and follow Jesus?

The King's Way – Study 3
Matthew 16:13-28 – The King Revealed

1. What are some of the different responses that people might give to the question, 'Who is Jesus'?

Read Matthew 16:13-28.

2. In what ways does Peter's answer to Jesus' question differ from what others are saying about Jesus?

6. How does this differ from the way that we, or others, might view the church today?

7. In verse 20, Jesus strangely warns his disciples not to reveal his identity. In what ways do Jesus' words in verse 21, and Peter's response in verse 22, help us to understand why this might be necessary?

8. How does Jesus' upcoming experience serve as a pattern for those who would follow him (verses 24-28)?

9. What might we struggle with in this? What might motivate us to nevertheless still take this path?
10. What particularly stands out to you about Jesus from today's section of Matthew's Gospel?
11. In what ways has today's section of Matthew's Gospel confirmed, clarified, or challenged your understanding of what it means to trust and follow Jesus?

The King's Way – Study 4
Matthew 17:1-27 – The Servant King

1. Think about some of the most spectacular sights you have ever witnessed. Share one or two of these with your group, along with why they were so spectacular.

Read Matthew 17:1-13.

2. In what ways is this episode a foretaste of what Jesus promised in 16:28?

3. What is good about Peter’s reaction? What is insufficient about his reaction?
4. In what ways does the voice from the cloud provide clarity on the question of Jesus’ identity?
5. Given what we have discovered about Jesus’ identity, what strikes you about:
- i) Jesus’ treatment of the disciples (vv. 6-8)?
 - ii) Jesus’ words regarding what will happen to him (vv. 11-13)?

Read Matthew 17:14-23.

6. What does this episode teach us about the faithlessness of Israel (as represented by the disciples)?

7. In what ways can we sometimes be like them?

8. How does Matthew present Jesus as a contrast to the faithlessness of others?

Read Matthew 17:24-27.

9. What do we discover about Jesus from this interaction regarding the temple tax?

10. What particularly stands out to you about Jesus from today's section of Matthew's Gospel?

11. In what ways has today's section of Matthew's Gospel confirmed, clarified, or challenged your understanding of what it means to trust and follow Jesus?

The King's Way – Study 5
Matthew 18:1-35 – The King's new people

1. What do you find a blessing as you relate with other Christians? What do you find difficult?

Read Matthew 18:1-6.

2. How does Jesus define greatness?

3. In what ways is this different to how the world views greatness?

4. How might our views more closely resemble the world's view as opposed to Jesus' view?

Read Matthew 18:10-14.

5. How are we to treat other believers?

Read Matthew 18:7-9 and 15-20.

6. What are we to do with:

i) Our own sin (vv. 7-9)?

ii) The sin of others (vv. 15-20)?

Read Matthew 18:21-35.

7. In what ways is this parable related to what has come before?

8. What does this parable teach us about:

i) God's forgiveness of us?

ii) Our forgiveness of others?

9. What particularly stands out to you about Jesus from today's section of Matthew's Gospel?

10. In what ways has today's section of Matthew's Gospel confirmed, clarified, or challenged your understanding of what it means to trust and follow Jesus?

The King's Way – Study 6
Matthew 19:1-12 – Marriage in the Kingdom

1. What are some of the different ways in which marriage is portrayed in our culture?

Read Matthew 19:1-12.

2. What are we told about the intention behind the Pharisees' question in verse 3?

3. How does Jesus respond (vv. 4-6)?

4. In what ways does Jesus' teaching here also speak into our society's view of marriage?

5. What is the response of the Pharisees to Jesus' teaching?

6. How does Jesus respond this time (verses 8-9)?

7. Given the way that Jesus approaches this topic, what can we learn in terms of dealing with other difficult ethical issues?

8. The disciples conclude, “it is better not to marry” (v. 10). From Jesus’ response, are they correct? Why/why not?

9. What particularly stands out to you about Jesus from today's section of Matthew's Gospel?

10. In what ways has today's section of Matthew's Gospel confirmed, clarified, or challenged your understanding of what it means to trust and follow Jesus?

The King's Way – Study 7
Matthew 19:13-20:16
The upside-down Kingdom

1. Discuss together the ways in which Christianity is different to the prevailing views of those around us. See if you can come up with at least half a dozen.

Read Matthew 19:13-15.

2. Why do you think the disciples rebuked those who brought the little children to Jesus?

3. What do we learn about Jesus from this short but moving encounter?

Read Matthew 19:16-30.

4. In what ways does this man represent an ideal candidate for Jesus' team?

5. What is his problem?

6. Is there any hope for anyone to be saved and enter the Kingdom? Why/why not?

7. Place yourself in the shoes (sandals?) of the disciples as they witnessed these two encounters with Jesus (vv. 13-15 and vv. 16-30). In what ways might we also be in danger of misunderstanding the ways of the Kingdom?

Read Matthew 20:1-16.

8. Reflect together on the various ways in which this parable connects with Jesus' two previous encounters.

9. What particularly stands out to you about Jesus from today's section of Matthew's Gospel?

10. In what ways has today's section of Matthew's Gospel confirmed, clarified, or challenged your understanding of what it means to trust and follow Jesus?

The King's Way – Study 8
Matthew 20:17-34 – Greatness in the Kingdom

1. What are some common ways in which people use their authority (e.g. government leaders; bosses in workplaces; parents in homes)?

Read Matthew 20:17-34.

2. What will going to Jerusalem involve for Jesus?

3. Compare Jesus' words here with his two previous predictions (16:21; 17:22-23). What is similar and what is different? What does this suggest?

4. Given what Jesus has just said, what is so jarring about the request that the mother of Zebedee's sons makes?

5. Why do you think the other disciples were indignant (v. 24)?

6. What does Jesus say greatness looks like in the Kingdom?

7. How is Jesus the supreme example of this?

8. In what ways do the two blind men make a model response to Jesus?

9. In what ways might their experience also be symbolic of what needs to happen to everyone if they are to follow Jesus?

10. What particularly stands out to you about Jesus from today's section of Matthew's Gospel?

11. In what ways has today's section of Matthew's Gospel confirmed, clarified, or challenged your understanding of what it means to trust and follow Jesus?

