

matthew experiencing the presence of the Kingdom

----> **connect...** Psalm 37 helps us see the perspective God has. Let it speak to you and lead you to praise as you connect with Him this week. Psalm 37:1-4. What are we to do rather than worry?

----> **discover...** This week we will continue to look at the teachings of Jesus through the parables. For the purpose of this study, we will be taking them at "face value" without attempting to interpret them to the fullest. If you desire to dig deeper on your own, a book called *The Parables of Jesus* by James Montgomery Boice, may be helpful to you. Also, a commentary on the book of Matthew by D.A. Carson is excellent.

1. Read the parable of the weeds from Matthew 13:24-30, praying for God to give you ears to hear. How does Jesus describe the kingdom of heaven in this parable? _____

a. What happened while everyone was sleeping? _____

b. Who caused this to happen? _____

c. Why did the sower not want the weeds pulled? _____

d. What will happen at harvest time? _____

2. Read Jesus explanation of this parable in Matthew 13:36-44. Who is the sower? _____

a. What is the field? _____

b. What are the good seeds? _____

c. What are the weeds? _____

d. Who sows them amongst the good wheat? _____

3. Think about harvest time for the kingdom of heaven (vv. 40-43). Who will the angels weed out?

a. What will happen to them? _____

b. What will happen to the righteous? _____

c. Who planted the righteous seeds? _____

4. What do you learn about your King and His kingdom from this parable and from 2 Corinthians 11:13-15?

----> **consider...** Jesus plants the righteous seed. Satan plants weeds in the midst of that seed. Sometimes it's hard to tell the good wheat from the tares (weeds), but God knows. It is not our place to examine the field and pick out the weeds—the angels will do that when God is ready. Are you learning about the sovereignty of your King? Talk about His parable with Him.

----> **apply...** Matthew 14:31 is a great verse to memorize. It will come to your mind every time you are afraid Jesus isn't paying attention. You **can** memorize it!

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----> **connect...** Read Psalm 37:5-7. What are we to do?

----> **discover...** Jesus continues to teach about the kingdom of heaven with the parables of the mustard seed and the yeast. Read these parables in Matthew 13:31-35.

1. In the mustard seed parable, how does Jesus describe the kingdom of heaven (v.31-32)? _____

a. How does He describe it in the yeast parable (v. 33)? _____

b. What do you think Jesus is saying about the growth of the kingdom? _____

2. Read the parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl from Matthew 13:44-46. What did the man do when he found the treasure (v. 44)? Why? _____

a. Did the price he paid for that field cover the cost of the treasure? _____

b. What did the merchant do in verses 45 and 46? _____

c. What do you learn from the attitude of these two buyers? What were they willing to give? Why? _____

3. Think back to the exchange between Jesus and the teacher of the law (Matthew 8:18-22). Sometimes we think the cost of following Jesus is too high, but is it really? Share your thoughts.

4. Do you know anyone who has made personal sacrifices for the kingdom of heaven? What did they do?

----> **consider...** Do you realize the treasure that is before you? What's your attitude? If asked to, would you sell all you had to attain it? Would you sacrifice at all? The kingdom of heaven has been given to you freely (Matthew 10:8); will you now freely give? Prayerfully consider what you are hearing Jesus say.

----> **apply...** What will you give today? Keep learning Matthew 14:31.

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----> **connect...** Psalm 37:8-13. Any thoughts?

----> **discover...** The parable of the fishing net reiterates what Jesus has been saying about the kingdom.

1. Read Matthew 13:47-50. How does Jesus describe the kingdom in this parable? _____

a. What will happen in the end (judgment)? _____

b. Read Philippians 1:1-6. Who is producing a good work in us? _____

i. When will this work be completed? _____

ii. Do we need to worry about being rejected on judgment day? _____

iii. What does Romans 8:1 say? _____

2. According to verses 51-52, are the disciples understanding Jesus' teachings? _____

What does he say about teachers of the law? _____

3. Read Matthew 13:53-58. What happens when Jesus returns to His hometown? _____

4. How did Jesus respond to them? _____

5. Why do you think His hometown had such a hard time accepting Him? _____

6. What was the impact of their lack of faith (v. 58)? _____

7. How do you think Jesus felt when this occurred? _____

----> **consider...** Do you ever feel misunderstood? Unaccepted? Even rejected? And this by those who are "supposed to" love you the most (Your family and neighbors). Can Jesus relate to you in this? Review Hebrews 2:17-18, asking God to give you the grace to respond as He would.

----> **apply...** In your journal write down how you feel Jesus would want you to respond to those by whom you feel misunderstood. Keep memorizing Matthew 14:31.

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----> **connect...** Psalm 37:14-20. What do the wicked do? Does God see?

----> **discover...** Read the story of John the Baptist in Matthew 14:1-12.

1. Who was Herod according to Luke 3:1? _____

a. What happened between John and Herod in Luke 3:19? _____

b. What did Herod hear about and what did he think according to Luke 9:7-9? _____

2. From Matthew 14:1-12, who did Herod think Jesus was? _____

a. What did John say to Herod that infuriated him so? _____

b. Why didn't Herod just kill John on the spot? _____

3. Herod had quite a birthday party. Who danced for him? _____

a. What did Herod promise her? _____

b. What did the mother (Herodias) want? _____

c. Why do you think she wanted that? _____

d. What happened to John? _____

e. What did John's disciples do? _____

4. Think about who John the Baptist was and what an incredible ministry he had. Read about him in Luke 3:1-20. What was his main job? _____

a. Read what "everyone" said about John in Luke 1:66. Whose hand was with him? _____

b. From a human perspective, does this look like a blessed life? What do you learn about an eternal perspective from the life and death of John? _____

----> **consider...** Spend a few moments with your Father thinking about John the Baptist. He lived his life faithfully preaching as God asked him to. He died a horrible death. Talk to God about what you learn from this godly man.

----> **apply...** Keep learning Matthew 14:31.

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----> **connect...** Psalm 37:21-26. What are some differences between the righteous and the wicked? What verse stands out to you from this psalm? Use it to guide your prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to teach you through His Word.

----> **discover...** Jesus is mourning the death of his friend, John the Baptist. He withdraws to a solitary place. Luke (5:6) tells us that Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. Read Matthew 14:13-21.

1. How did Jesus look at the crowd when He saw them (v. 14)? _____
 - a. What did He do (v. 14)? _____
 - b. What did the disciples want Jesus to do as evening approached? Why? _____

 - c. What was Jesus' reply? _____
 - d. What happened next? _____

 - e. How many ate? _____
 - f. How does this miracle confirm Matthew 6:25-34? _____

2. Read Matthew 14:22-33. Why did Jesus want to be alone? _____
 - a. Summarize what happened in verses 23-26. _____

 - b. What do the disciples cry out? What does Jesus say? _____

 - c. What did Peter say? And Jesus? _____

 - d. Why did Peter begin to sink? _____
 - e. How did Jesus respond? _____

5. Think about Peter. What was his initial intention? _____
 - a. Was he wrong to cry out for help when afraid? _____
 - b. How long did Jesus take to respond to his cry? _____

----> **consider...** Jesus wants us to step out on faith and trust Him no matter what. Are you ready to step out with Him? Tell Him! He is there waiting to help you. Keep your focus on the One who commands us to "come."

----> **apply...** In your journal, write down where you believe you need to step out in faith, trusting Jesus. Recite Matthew 14:31.

