

matthew experiencing the presence of the Kingdom

----> **connect...** Psalm 25 is a perfect psalm to meditate on as we consider “taking” up our cross” (death to self). Use Psalm 25:1-3 to guide you in prayer.

----> **discover...** Read Matthew 15:1-20 aloud, slowly.

1. Read verses 1-9 again. What are the Pharisees and teachers questioning Jesus about now? _____

a. What does Jesus ask in verse 3? _____

Note: This “tradition” is part of the Pharasaic regulations—oral teaching that commented on the law and interpreted it in detailed rules of conduct.

b. What did God say? _____

c. How were the Pharisees nullifying the Word of God (vv.5-6)? _____

d. What does Jesus call them? And what did Isaiah prophesy about them? _____

e. Why do you think this is so offensive to Jesus? _____

2. Jesus calls the crowd to teach them an important truth. What does He say in verse 11? What does that say to you? _____

a. The disciples are worried about offending the Pharisees (v. 12). How does Jesus respond in verses 13-14? _____

b. Peter asks for more explanation (Matthew 15:15-20). Jesus repeats verse 11, and then adds more. What does He say in verse 18? _____

c. How about verses 19-20? _____

3. How can we purify our hearts? What does the Word say in:

Psalm 24:4 _____

Psalm 51:10 _____

Psalm 119:9 _____

I John 1:9 _____

Galatians 5:16 _____

4. What are some ways you think our hearts are polluted? _____

----> **consider...** Jesus was disgusted by the Pharisees’ focus on the external. God looks at the heart! What’s coming out of your heart? How’s your thought life? Review the verses in question 3 (a-e). God wants to purify your heart as you offer it to Him. Will you? Take some time and let God examine your heart.

----> **apply...** Begin memorizing Matthew 16:24.

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----> **connect...** Psalm 25:4-7.

----> **discover...** Read Matthew 15:21-28. Jesus has left Jewish territory and entered pagan (Gentile) territory. The Canaanites were ancient enemies of the Jews (Israelites). "Children" refers to the Jews and "dogs" to Gentiles.

1. What did the Canaanite woman call Jesus, and what was her request (vv. 21-22)? _____

2. Jesus does not immediately respond to her. What do the disciples say? _____
 - a. What is Jesus' response? (v. 24) _____
 - b. What does the woman do? (v. 25) _____
 - c. What does Jesus say? (v. 26) _____
 - d. Does the woman disagree? What does she say? _____

 - e. Listen to Jesus' reply. What thrills Him? _____

3. Read Matthew 15:29-39. Summarize what Jesus did in verses 29-31 and tell how the people responded.

4. Why did Jesus have compassion on these people? What did He say? _____

 - a. What was the reply of the disciples (v. 33)? Sound familiar? (see Matthew 14:17) _____

 - b. Summarize what happened in verses 34-38. _____

 - c. How many were fed in all? Think about that scene. What would that be like? _____

5. What are you learning about your King (throughout Matthew)? Who does He extend His love and grace to?

 - a. Does He ever seem inconvenienced? _____
 - b. What does He **not** have patience for? _____
 - c. What seems to please Him? _____

----> **consider...** Are you seeing Jesus as a gentle King as opposed to a dominant King? He is a gentleman. He doesn't force His way in. The Canaanite woman experienced true grace by her faith. Have you? Do you **know** Jesus is capable of meeting your deepest needs? Have you cried out to Him in faith?

----> **apply...** Write in your journal what you are learning about King Jesus. Keep memorizing Matthew 16:24.

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----> **connect...** Psalm 25:8-13.

----> **discover...** Read Matthew 16:1-4 along with Mark 8:11-13.

1. What did Jesus do when He heard the Pharisees' question according to Mark 8:12? Why do you think He did this? _____

a. How does He answer them in Matthew 16:2-4? _____

b. Does Jesus linger with them? What did He do? _____

c. When it comes to hearing the truth, do you think some people would rather keep arguing then truly listening to Jesus' words? Have you experienced this? _____

d. How is Jesus demonstrating the prophecy from Isaiah in Matthew 12:19-21? _____

2. Read Matthew 16:5-12. Jesus leaves with His disciples and He warns them about the Pharisees and Sadducees. What does He say? _____

a. What did the disciples think He was talking about? _____

b. What does Jesus remind them of? _____

c. What did His warning really mean? _____

3. Aren't we often like the disciples? We don't go deeper with Christ because we are so distracted by the temporal? What has our King promised us (See Matthew 6:25-34)? Share your thoughts: _____

----> **consider...** Listen to Jesus' question, "You of little faith, why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not understand? Don't you remember...?" Are you hung up with worry over things Jesus has already promised? He loves you---He will meet your needs as you trust Him with them. Go deeper! Ask Him to open your mind to His perspective.

----> **apply...** Keep memorizing Matthew 16:24.

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----> connect... Psalm 25:14-22.

----> discover... Read Matthew 16:13-20.

1. What question does Jesus ask in verse 13? _____
 a. Their reply: _____
2. What does Jesus ask in verse 15? _____
 a. Simon Peter's answer: _____
 b. Record Jesus' reply from verse 17: _____

 c. What does Matthew 11:27 say? _____

3. What does Jesus say in verse 18? _____

Note: "Hades" means the "powers of death."

- a. What does Jesus say He will give in verse 19? _____

Note: Here we have some more verses that can be interpreted many different ways. We will look at them in the most simple and general way:

"Keys" – The message of the kingdom, the good news of Jesus Christ.

"Bound and loosed" – people saved and unsaved. Those who belong to the kingdom and those who don't.

4. Jesus is not spoon-feeding His disciples anymore (see 16:5). He wants them to think deeper. Their **faith** in Him is allowing them to **understand more. Faith** precedes **understanding**. Faith comes through knowing the Word. Jesus is the Word (Romans 10:17; John 1:1,14). As the disciples spend more time with Jesus, He begins to reveal deeper truths—hidden treasure. Do you think the same is true for us? Share your thoughts: _____

5. Psalm 25:14 says, "The Lord confides in those who fear Him." What does that mean to you? _____

----> consider... Peter "knew" Jesus was the Messiah. John the Baptist told everyone. What's the difference now? Is He perhaps recognizing more of what that means? Is God revealing more to him? How about you? Is your understanding increasing as you get to know your King? Discuss what you're learning with your Father.

----> apply... Who do you say Jesus is? Write your answer in your journal. Keep memorizing Matthew 16:24.

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----> **connect...** Praise God using all of Psalm 25.

----> **discover...** Read Matthew 16:21-23.

1. From "that time on" (see verses 17-20), Jesus began to explain deeper things to His disciples. What were they? _____

a. What was Peter's reaction? _____

b. Why did Jesus rebuke Peter? _____

c. What was wrong with the way Peter was thinking? _____

2. Slowly read Matthew 16:24-28 aloud. Here, Jesus again is talking about "death to self." It seems that it is not so much a prerequisite to follow Jesus, but a **continuing characteristic**. What does following Jesus require? _____

a. Why? _____

b. What's the reward? _____

c. What questions does Jesus ask? _____

d. Who's going to give out the rewards for obedience? _____

e. What will it be like when Jesus returns according to Luke 17:30-37? _____

f. What does Acts 1:11 say about it? _____

g. 1 Thessalonians 4:16? _____

h. Revelation 1:7? _____

i. Revelation 22:7? _____

3. Jesus is not just talking dramatically, He's talking with truth. Our life in Him is realized through death to self. Can we do it? Read I Corinthians 1:7-9. Write what it says and share your thoughts: _____

----> **consider:** Does I Corinthians 1:7-9 call you to give thanks? God asks us to live this life of obedience to the cross (death) and then empowers us to live it and THEN rewards us for it! What amazing grace! Will you praise Him and tell Him of your desire to follow Him?

----> **apply...** Have you asked God to show you where you're not willing to die to your selfishness? Will you? Recite Matthew 16:24.

