

Below are your discussion questions for our King & Countries series. Over the next 6 weeks, we'll work through these passages in Matthew. These are some suggested questions for you to ask. Feel free to add your own. Don't feel obligated to do them all. The point isn't to finish all of the questions but to discuss the passage. Make sure you read the passage together and then repeatedly encourage everyone to find the answers in the passage.

Matthew 9:1-17

1. What would you say if someone asked you, "What is your greatest need?" Explain your answer.
2. Explain the difference between suffering that is directly related to your own sin and suffering that comes as a result of living in a fallen world.
3. If someone said that Jesus never claimed to be divine, how could you respond by using the account of the paralytic?
4. How might Jesus' calling of Matthew give us hope for unbelievers we know who seem unreachable with the gospel?
5. Why do disciples of Jesus fast now? What does this say about our ultimate hope?

Matthew 9:18-34

6. How does the account of the woman touching Jesus' robe speak against the idea of earning God's favor?
7. How does the blindness of the two men in verses 27-31 serve as an indictment of the Jewish leadership?
8. Explain the following statement: Satan's defeat is in the past, but his final destruction is in the future.
9. What is the danger of merely admiring Jesus' supernatural abilities?
10. What two or three aspects of Jesus character stand out in this pas-sage? Do these things come to mind when you think about Jesus?

Matthew 9:35-10:42

1. Share a ministry opportunity you've had that opened your eyes to the great spiritual needs around you. How might you pursue such opportunities in the near future?
2. Do the massive spiritual needs of the world compel you to action or make you feel helpless? How might Jesus's call to pray in 9:38 impact your reaction?
3. How would you describe your attitude toward unbelieving coworkers and neighbors? What factors keep you from feeling compassion for them?
4. Why is the Bible's teaching on God's wrath and the final judgment essential to our motivation for making disciples?
5. How will you practically apply Jesus' summons to pray and go in this chapter?

6. What ministry situations tend to be the most difficult for you? Tesus speaks of being like sheep, snakes, and doves in Matthew 10. How would this apply to your current context?
7. What aspects of being like Christ cause you the most fear and anxiety? What promises in God's Word might bolster your security and joy? Name two fellow believers you might reach out to for strength.
8. What aspects of God's character in this chapter ground our confidence in Christ's mission?
9. In what situations have you been reluctant to confess Christ publicly?
10. How does God's promised reward help fuel our faith and the carrying out of our mission?

Matthew 11

1. How has doubt been a struggle in your own relationship with God? What truths from God's Word were the most difficult to believe in the midst of your doubts?
2. How can difficulties, disappointments, and suffering feed into our doubts? How did this play out in the life of John the Baptist?
3. Why is it futile to fight doubt apart from the foundation of God's Word?
4. How is joyful submission to Jesus an antidote to doubt? Explain.
5. Many Christians wish they had lived in the time when Scriptures were recorded. How does this passage correct such a notion?
6. How might the expectation of opposition and criticism from the world help you persevere in the faith? What is the danger to your faith of not expecting trials?
7. How does Jesus' role as your authoritative Judge affect how you relate to Him? How might it affect your approach to sharing the gospel with others?
8. Jesus is presented as the sovereign Son in Matthew 11. How does this portrait of Jesus correct our culture's understanding of Him? How about your own?
9. In your own words, explain why Matthew 11:28-30 speaks against the idea of works-righteousness. How does it speak to the notion that the Christian life is burdensome?
10. How would you respond to the following questions: "What is my role and responsibility in responding to the gospel? What is God's role in this process?"

Matthew 12

1. Why are legalistic hearts so resistant to Jesus?
2. How does legalism and a desire to earn your standing before God manifest itself in your own life?
3. Explain what it means to say that Jesus is greater than the temple.
4. Matthew presents Christ as merciful in this passage. How is the mercy of Jesus different from a "live and let live" mind-set?
5. In an effort to make the cost of following Christ clear, what is the danger of downplaying His mercy?

6. How might the portrait of Jesus' power in this passage impact our view of spiritual warfare?
7. How would you counsel someone who feared that they had committed the unpardonable sin because of a sinful thought or word toward God?
8. Matthew compares Jesus to Jonah and Solomon. How do these comparisons speak to the seriousness of rejecting Christ?
9. It's common to hear unbelievers refer to everyone as "God's chil-dren." How does Matthew 12:50 help us rightly define God's family?
10. Some sermons only emphasize moral lessons for believers. How does an emphasis on the person of Christ as we see in Matthew 12 help correct such an approach? What is the danger of not presenting Jesus as central in our teaching and preaching?

Matthew 13:1-52

1. How did Jesus' parables both reveal and conceal truth?
2. Explain how the kingdom can be both present and future.
3. How would you sum up the parable of the Sower in one or two sentences? How might the parable of the Sower help us avoid being manipulative in our preaching, teaching, and evangelizing?
4. What are some signs that the cares and riches of the world are choking out saving faith as the Bible describes it?
5. How is persevering faith different from works-righteousness?
6. What would you say to someone whose only evidence of salvation was a momentary decision?
7. What encouragement might come to persecuted believers from the parables of the Mustard Seed and Yeast?
8. What do the parables of the Weeds and the Net have to teach us about the final judgment? Why is it sometimes difficult to discern who is and who is not part of the kingdom?
9. How could you use the parables of the Treasure and the Pearl of Great Price to respond to someone who said, "I want to follow [Jesus] but I don't want to make drastic changes in my life"?
10. What wrong conceptions of the kingdom has Matthew 13 corrected for you?

Matthew 13:53-14:36

1. How can the rejection of Jesus by His own hometown serve as a warning for you?
2. Why is costly faith better than convenient unbelief? What means of grace does God use to strengthen our faith?
3. Explain the difference in merely being amazed at Jesus' miracles and responding in faith.
4. List two truths to be gleaned from Jesus' feeding of the five thousand.
5. What people around you most need the compassion of Christ?
What are some practical ways you might serve them?

6. What evidence is there in your life that you are not relying on God to meet your needs? What anxieties and habits are indications of unbelief?
7. How does this passage present Jesus as greater than Moses? What does this teach us about the purpose of the Old Testament?
8. Explain the following statement: The most important thing is not the measure of our faith, but the object of our faith.
9. Make a list of Jesus' attributes that are on display in Matthew 14.
10. In what ways does Matthew 14 demonstrate Jesus' deity?

Matthew 15

1. What sources of authority and traditions compete with God's Word in the context in which you live?
2. If not everyone who quotes Scripture speaks the truth, then how can you prepare yourself to discern truth from error?
3. Answer the following question: "The Bible was written by men, so how can it be true in everything it says?" What passages might you appeal to in your answer?
4. What contemporary trends are putting pressure on believers to compromise faithfulness to God? How can our response involve courage and humility?
5. What is the danger of emphasizing emotions in our corporate worship without being driven by God's Word? What kind of spiritual affections should our corporate worship encourage?
6. In your own words, explain the difference between superficial religion and supernatural regeneration.
7. Jesus teaches that holiness proceeds from the heart. Practically, then, how do you cultivate such holiness?
8. How do you identify false teachers? Is it unloving to reject their teaching? If not, why not?
9. Like this Gentile Canaanite woman, what unlikely converts has God placed around you? How have you doubted God's power and mercy in relation to such people?
10. How does Jesus' interaction with this Canaanite woman and His feeding of the Gentile crowd help forecast the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20?