

>>>>>> Matthew – Lesson 34 <<<<<<<

1) Jesus completes this series of parables by asking the disciples a question ...

Matthew 13:51–52 (ESV)

New and Old Treasures

⁵¹ “Have you understood all these things?” They said to him, “Yes.” ⁵² And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

- 2) Since they answered yes, Jesus then tells them in essence what this should mean to them.
 - a) They have been trained for the kingdom of heaven – they were the blessed ones who were given to understand Jesus’ teachings.
 - b) And with that knowledge they were the ones who were going to be responsible to bring that knowledge and wisdom to others – both old (the prophesies and Torah pointing to Jesus) and new (Jesus’ teachings).
- 3) Patrick Schreiner in his book “Matthew, Disciple and Scribe: The First Gospel and Its Portrait of Jesus” says this about verse 52:

Matthew’s verse could therefore be translated: “Therefore every *discipled scribe* for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out his treasures new and old.” Jesus tells them that **a scribe (someone who works with texts) who becomes a disciple (following Jesus as a teacher of wisdom) can produce great things for the kingdom of heaven.** The metaphor “master of a house who brings out treasures” is an image for interpretation, for the entire chapter is about right interpretation and understanding of Jesus’s parables.³⁸

If you follow the reasoning of what Schreiner is saying, what does that mean to us – are we “discipled scribes”?

4) Yes, we should be and that means we should be, as far as possible, engaged in serious bible study – long term learning and goals.

1) Ok, to finish out chapter 13, we have another hometown incident.

Matthew 13:53–58 (ESV)

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

⁵³ And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, ⁵⁴ and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? ⁵⁵ Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶ And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?” ⁵⁷ And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and

³⁸ Patrick Schreiner, *Matthew, Disciple and Scribe: The First Gospel and Its Portrait of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2019), 9–10.

in his own household.”⁵⁸ And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

- 2) Most scholars do not think this is the same incident that is in Luke 4 when Jesus upsets the towns folks so much that they try to throw him over a cliff.
- 3) Here, we have amazement and major amounts of doubt but no hostility per se.
- 4) The major issue here is that he is unable to “do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.”
 - a) Jesus can heal and even raise the dead, so, we need to be sure we understand this statement.
 - i) The fact that he did not heal many people was most likely on purpose.
 - b) The reasons being:
 - i) Nazareth’s unbelief isn’t neutral doubt.
 - ii) It is caused by familiarity (“Is this not the carpenter’s son?”).
 - iii) Because of that, they dismiss him as being something less than he is.
 - iv) That leads to them being offended which leads to resistance and rejection.
 - c) Miracles in the Gospels are not magic displays. They are:
 - i) Signs
 - ii) Revelatory acts
 - iii) Invitations to faith
 - d) If a community has already hardened itself in rejection, doing signs or miracles may only intensify judgment rather than produce repentance.
 - e) So, the limitation may be the result of a decision not a limitation caused by their unbelief.

1) Ok moving on to Chapter 14 ...

Matthew 14:1–12(ESV)
The Death of John the Baptist

14 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus,² and he said to his servants, “This is John the Baptist. He has been raised from the dead; that is why these miraculous powers are at work in him.”³ For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife,⁴ because John had been saying to him, “It is not lawful for you to have her.”⁵ And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a prophet.⁶ But when Herod’s birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company and pleased Herod,⁷ so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask.⁸ Prompted by her mother, she said, “Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter.”⁹ And the king was sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given.¹⁰ He sent and had John beheaded in the prison,¹¹ and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother.¹² And his disciples came and took the body and buried it, and they went and told Jesus.

Where was Herod's palace and the place where John was imprisoned?

- a) Machaerus (Ma kee rus), east side of the Dead Sea opposite Jerusalem.
- b) Archeology and history.
- 2) John had gotten himself in trouble for speaking the truth.
- 3) Herod was not the greatest guy you would ever want to meet.
 - a) He had divorced his first wife, a Nabataean princess and daughter of King Aretas IV.
 - b) This act alone eventually caused a war.
 - c) He then married Herodias who was the wife of his half-brother Philip (also a tetrarch).
 - d) Other really not so great things about him were:
 - i) He entered a marriage widely viewed as unlawful.
 - ii) Political recklessness leading to war.
 - iii) He is seen as mocking Jesus during his trial.
 - iv) Moral cowardice and abuse of power
 - v) Sought the title “king.”
 - vi) Was accused of conspiracy against Rome by his nephew Agrippa.
 - vii) Was finally exiled to Gaul in AD 39 by Emperor Caligula.
 - e) Not what one would call an “illustrious” career or life!
- 4) When we read both this account and that of Mark, we see that Herod and Herodias wanted to kill John.
 - a) Perhaps more so Herodias than Herod.
- 5) Regardless of who wanted it most, the scheme is put in place by Herodias and her daughter and the deed is done – John is beheaded!

1) An alternate title for this passage might be “No rest or alone time for the Master” ...

Matthew 14:13–21(ESV)

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

¹³ Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. ¹⁵ Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.” ¹⁶ But Jesus said, “**They need not go away; you give them something to eat.**” ¹⁷ They said to him, “We have only five loaves here and two fish.” ¹⁸ And he said, “**Bring them here to me.**” ¹⁹ Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰ And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. ²¹ And those who ate were about **five thousand men**, besides women and children.

2) We really don't know how close Jesus was to his cousin.

- a) I think we can infer from his reaction that he was very close.
- b) After all, they had possibly grown up together.
- 3) Whether that inference is correct or not, we do know that Jesus wanted to be by himself for a while after hearing the news about John.
 - a) We do not know where Jesus was when he heard but we do know that he went by boat from that place to where he wanted to be alone.
 - b) However, that was not to be!
 - c) The crowds followed and Jesus having compassion on them healed all their sick.
 - d) The compassion does not end there – instead after an exchange with his disciples he miraculously feeds the crowd using only two fish and five loaves which the disciples had.
 - i) The actual size of the crowd could have been as large as 10,000 people.
 - ii) Just to distribute food to that many people is a major undertaking, not to mention the collecting of the 12 baskets of leftovers.
- 4) There is a lesson in this for us.

What do you see as the real lesson for us in our daily lives?

- a) I would say that we need to be like Jesus when we run into situations where people need our compassion and help.
 - b) Put ourselves on hold for a bit and take care of those who need.
 - c) Jesus always put others in front of himself.
 - i) Something that is not easy for us to do but it is lesson we can take from this.
 - d) To say it a little differently – God presents us with opportunities – we should always try to take “self” out of the equation and take advantage of those opportunities.
- 1) As we move on to verses 22-33, we begin with Jesus getting some alone time ...

Matthew 14:22–33(ESV)

Jesus Walks on the Water

²² Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³ And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴ but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. ²⁵ And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. ²⁶ But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, “It is a ghost!” and they cried out in fear. ²⁷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, **“Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.”**

²⁸ And Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” ²⁹ He said, **“Come.”** So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me.” ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold

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of him, saying to him, **“O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”** ³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, **“Truly you are the Son of God.”**

- 2) The fourth watch indicates a time of from 3:00 to 6:00 in the morning.
 - a) So, we begin by seeing that Jesus had spent a significant amount of time in prayer and perhaps just reflection.

Do you ever spend significant periods of time in prayer and just being alone with the word and God?

- b) There is an exercise that is part of the Discipleship Cohort studies that I participated in and led.
 - i) We were to spend 4 hours in prayer and study and reflection.
 - c) I found it really interesting and surprisingly easier than I thought it would be.
 - d) To be honest, I should do it on a regular basis but just haven't.
 - e) At any rate, it is something to think about.
- 3) As we continue, we see Jesus walking toward them on the water.
- 4) Now it is likely starting to get light and when the disciples see him, they think he is a ghost.
 - a) The word used is only used 2 times in the NT and it means an apparition.
 - b) These guys feared this apparition – the visible non-human thing they saw walking on the water.
 - c) But what they were actually seeing was even more extraordinary – it was a real man walking on the sea.
 - d) Only God could do that!
- 5) Jesus hears their cries or knows what they are feeling and calms them with **“Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.”**
- 6) This is another of those progression things – they see, then they fear, then they misunderstand, and finally they recognize Jesus.
- 7) At this point, Peter probably is very much convinced that this “person” is Jesus.
- 8) With that he also realizes that the situation says that it may be that he can also do miraculous things by the power of Jesus.
 - a) This is not Peter testing the power of Jesus – it is Peter proving to himself that all that he is thinking is true.
 - b) As one commentator put it, he is possibly performing an experiment.
- 9) Regardless of the reason, he steps out of the boat onto the water and begins to walk which says two things:
 - a) The answer is – Yes, this is Jesus.
 - b) Yes – Peter can do what the Lord commands – walk on water!

So, what happens – why does Peter begin to sink?

- c) Peter did lose faith.
- d) Christ says, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”
- e) But what he doubted was not Christ – it was the experiment and what he was doing.
 - i) He was experiencing the ability to do exactly what his Master was doing.
 - ii) When he got distracted by the wind and sea, it was the faith in what he was doing that wavered – not his faith in Christ.
- f) **The key is** he lost focus on where the power was coming from – thinking of his abilities and forgetting about the power Christ was giving.

Do we have situations like this?

- g) My thought would be yes.
 - h) Anytime we ask for God’s direction, get it, then once we get started on the path, we have doubts as to whether “we” made the right decision or not.
 - i) We are losing our confidence in the answer we received and God’s power to see us through that decision.
 - j) Perhaps lapsing into thinking about our abilities!
- 10) Of course, the incident concludes with Jesus saving Peter.
- 11) Then, once in the boat, the calming of the sea, and a worshipful moment for their Master and Lord.

- 1) Chapter 14 ends with them reaching their destination and more healings ...

Matthew 14:34–36(ESV)

Jesus Heals the Sick in Gennesaret

³⁴ And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. ³⁵ And when the men of that place recognized him, they sent around to all that region and brought to him all who were sick ³⁶ and implored him that they might only touch the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.

- 2) Gennesaret was on the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee, in strongly Jewish Galilee.
 - a) Not to be confused with Gadara, which is part of the Decapolis where the demons were cast into the pigs back in Mat 8:28 ff. (South and west of the Sea of Galilee)
 - b) When we get to 15:29-39 shortly, we will see them back in the Decapolis and see a strong possibility that that is where the feeding of the 4000 takes place.