

BA Study Guide: Matthew 13-16

Overview

Matthew 13–16 shifts from crowd-pleasing miracles to kingdom confrontation. Jesus teaches in parables that divide listeners, withdraws for spiritual solitude, calls out religious games, and makes one thing unmistakably clear: **Following Him requires full surrender.**

These chapters are not a highlight reel. They're a refining fire.

Chapter Breakdown

Matthew 13 – Soil, Seeds, and Secrets

- The Parable of the Sower defines four types of people:
 - Hard soil: hears the Word, but Satan snatches it.
 - Rocky soil: quick emotional response, but no root.
 - Thorny soil: distracted by money, stress, and culture.
 - Good soil: hears, understands, obeys—and multiplies.
- Jesus also calls the kingdom a treasure worth *everything*—even selling all you have to buy the field it's hidden in.

Key Truth

God's Word has power—but it needs soil that's surrendered.

Reflection Question

Where in your life are you allowing distractions to choke out obedience?

Matthew 14 – Miracles, Fear, and Faith

- Jesus feeds 5,000+ with five loaves and two fish.
- Then He walks on water—and Peter joins Him, briefly, until fear wins.

Jesus doesn't scold Peter for trying. He calls him out for doubting.

Key Truth

Fear is loud—but obedience is louder when your eyes stay on Jesus.

Action Step

What step of faith have you been avoiding? Write it down. Do it this week.

Matthew 15 – Lip Service vs. Heart Surrender

- The Pharisees are obsessed with tradition.
- Jesus says: “You honor Me with your lips, but your hearts are far from Me.”
- Then He honors a Gentile woman’s relentless faith—something the religious elite didn’t have.

Key Truth

Religion talks. Faith *pursues*. Even when God seems silent.

Confession Prompt

Where have you been relying on tradition or routine instead of real-time trust in God?

Matthew 16 – The Question That Changes Everything

- Jesus asks, “*Who do you say I am?*”
- Peter answers, “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*”
- Then Jesus calls him a rock—but moments later rebukes him for trying to sidestep the cross.

“Get behind Me, Satan! You are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

Key Truth

It’s possible to say the right thing... and still fight against God’s will.

Gut-Check

Is your life aligned with the confession that Jesus is Lord—or are you subtly resisting His path?

God’s Character Revealed

- **He’s a revealer of truth (Matt. 13)**
- **He’s a provider in scarcity (Matt. 14)**
- **He’s not impressed with performance (Matt. 15)**
- **He’s a relentless refiner of His people (Matt. 16)**

What This Confronts in Me

- My desire for Jesus to bless my life without changing it
- My tendency to measure spirituality by routine, not fruit
- My fear of stepping out in obedience
- My pride that resists the cross and seeks control

Memory Verse

Matthew 16:24

“If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.”

This is the essence of Christian manhood. Not polished faith—*crucified* faith.

Today’s Battle Plan

- Ask God to reveal the condition of your heart’s soil
- Confess any area where fear has paralyzed your obedience
- Memorize Matthew 16:24 and repeat it every morning for the next seven days
- Reach out to one brother and answer Jesus’ question together:
“Who do you say I am?”

Evangelism Tip

When someone sees peace in you, and asks why—don’t give them a general answer. Give them Jesus. Say, “Because He’s not just Savior. He’s Lord. And when He’s in charge, storms still hit—but I don’t sink.”

Disciple-Making Tip

Ask a brother:

“What’s the hardest thing Jesus has asked you to do lately?”

Then *listen without fixing*. Let accountability be a mirror, not a magnifying glass.

Final Charge

Jesus doesn’t ask for attendance. He demands allegiance.

He doesn’t want you just saying He’s Lord.

He wants your life to prove it.

Get out of shallow faith.

Dig into the Word.

Answer the question.

And *take up your cross*.