

SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS

The Disciples Learn More about Themselves and Jesus Matthew 14

"Truly you are the Son of God". Matthew 14:33b

Day 1: Read Matthew 14:1-12.

1. Why does Herod arrest, bind and behead John?

2. What contrasts can you find between John and Herod in this passage?

3. In what ways do the lives of John and Jesus follow the pattern of God's prophets throughout Israel's history? (2 Chr. 24: 20-22; Mt. 14:10; 23:37; Jn. 19:17, 18, 30) (📖* Heb 11:32-37)

4. Matthew's readers, in the early church, are facing hardship and persecution. Why would these details about John's death be important and somewhat encouraging to them? (Mt. 5:11-12; 10:17-28; Phil. 1:29)

What does it mean for us today? (1 Pet. 4:12-16-19)

Days 2 and 3: Read Matthew 14:13-21.

5. Jesus, understandably, wants to spend some time alone after receiving the sad news about John's death. What does Jesus understand about himself that makes it possible for him to give up his own desire for some down time and focus on the crowd? (Mt. 12:18; Mt. 20:28; Jn. 6:38)

6. How do you respond when your agenda is changed or you feel pressed by the needs of those around you? What understanding do you need to respond in a godly way to these pressures? (2 Cor. 9:8; 12:9, 10)

7. What do we learn about Jesus as we see him respond, interact and care for the crowd?

8. How would you describe the resources the disciples brought to Jesus to feed five thousand people?

What words would you use to describe the results of what Jesus did with these resources?

* The 📖 symbol identifies verses for further study.

9. Jesus uses the circumstances of daily life as a teaching opportunity for his disciples. What pattern does Jesus model for meeting needs with seemingly inadequate resources? (vv. 18, 19)

10. How can you apply this pattern to a situation in your life where you feel like you have inadequate resources?

Days 4 and 5: Read Matthew 14:22-36.

11. What words would you use to describe the scene the disciples found themselves in as Jesus approaches them walking on the lake?

12. In verse 28, Peter's fear is transformed into courage. In verse 30 Peter's courage reverts to fear. Since the fierceness of the storm and the presence of Jesus remain constant, what explains the change in Peter's response?

13. What does Jesus want his disciples (and us) to learn about who he is and the resources he has at his disposal? What difference does this make when we are afraid in the midst of our storms?

14. This is the second time the disciples have seen Jesus still a storm. What is their response the first time? What is their response the second time? How does the difference in their responses show that their understanding of who Jesus is continues to deepen? (Mt. 8:27; 14:33)

15. Compare the response of the people of Gennesaret to the people of Nazareth. How do their responses reflect their different understanding of who Jesus is? (14:36; 13:54-58)

16. Jesus' provision of food for five thousand people, his walking on water and his healing of the people of Gennesaret have all added to our understanding of who he is. How does this change the way you respond to him and to others?