

A Different Kingdom

The Disciples Learn More about Themselves and Jesus Matthew 14

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

1. Read Matthew 14:1–12 with Mark 6:17–28. Describe what happens to John the Baptist.
2. What sin concerning John festers in the heart of Herodias long before her outward crime? (Mark 6:19) How does her sin serve as a warning to us?
3. Describe the process of Herod’s sin. What are the dangers of acting in ways just to please other people?
4. Read Matthew 14:13–21. What does Jesus do after he hears about John’s death? (verse 13) What does Jesus understand that makes it possible for him to focus on the crowd that greets him? (Matthew 12:18; 20:28; John 6:38)
5. 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 Corinthians 9:8; 12:9–10)
6. Describe the resources the disciples brought to Jesus to feed five thousand people. Describe the results of what Jesus did with these resources.
7. After Jesus sends everyone away, what does he do? (verse 23) In spite of a full day, what do you think motivates Jesus to do this?

8. Read Matthew 14:22–36. Describe the scene the disciples find themselves in as Jesus approaches them walking on the water.

9. How does Peter demonstrate faith? How does he demonstrate unbelief? Since the fierceness of the storm and the presence of Jesus remain constant in these verses, what explains the change in Peter's response?

10. How can this story help you as you seek to follow and trust Jesus? When are you most tempted to take your eyes off Jesus and sink into doubt?

11. This is the second time the disciples have seen Jesus quiet a storm. What was their response the first time in Matthew 8:27? What is their response this time? (verse 33) What does the difference in their responses show?

12. How do the people of Gennesaret respond to Jesus? (verses 34-36) Recall the response to Jesus of those living in Nazareth (13:54-58). How do these different responses reflect a different understanding of who Jesus is?

13. Jesus' provision of food for five thousand people, his walking on water, and his healing of the people of Gennesaret all add to the disciples' understanding of who Jesus is. What events in your own life have led you to recognize who Jesus is?