

## ***A Different Kingdom***

### **Jesus Moves Toward the Gentiles Matthew 15:1—16:12**

*“But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart....”* Matthew 15:18a

1. Read Matthew 15:1–9. What is the Pharisees’ complaint against Jesus’ disciples?
2. What is the Pharisees’ priority in their relationship to God? What does Jesus say our priority should be in our relationship to God?
3. When Jesus refers to Isaiah 29:13 (15:8–9) what is the hypocrisy that Jesus points out? What is it that Jesus truly desires? (John 4:23–24)
4. Read Matthew 15:10–20. Jesus uses the confrontation by the teachers as a teaching opportunity. What are some evidences of an unclean heart? (verses 19–20)
5. People often blame outward circumstances for their sinful reactions. Where does Jesus say these reactions actually come from?
6. In what areas of your life do you think that you may value outward appearances over the state of your heart, or someone else’s heart?
7. How can you hope to have any good come from your sinful heart? (Ezekiel 36:26–27)
8. Jesus calls the Pharisees and teachers blind guides. What’s wrong with depending on a guide who can’t find the way? How is Jesus a different type of guide? (John 8:12; 14:6)

9. Read Matthew 15:21–28. What can we learn from this Gentile woman’s persistence? Why does Jesus respond to her like he does?
  
10. How do her statements reflect her understanding of who Jesus really is? For what is she commended?
  
11. Read Matthew 15:29–39. We find Jesus once again on a mountainside working many miracles. What effect do these miracles have on the crowds? (verse 31) What do they say about Jesus? (Isaiah 35:3–6)
  
12. Read Matthew 16:1–12. The Pharisees and Sadducees again come asking Jesus for a sign from heaven. What is the sign that Jesus says will be shown to them? Why doesn’t Jesus give them the sign they are looking for?
  
13. In the New Testament, yeast is almost always a symbol of evil and corruption. What effect does a little bit of yeast have on dough? Why do you think Jesus warns his disciples to be “on guard against the yeast of the Pharisees”? (verse 11) How is their teaching like yeast? How might this warning apply to our churches today, and to our own personal faith?