Matthew
Chapter 14



As you prepare for this week's study, begin by praying and asking God to open your heart and mind to understand the truths He has for you this week. Then read this week's chapter, Matthew 14. As you read through the entire chapter, what are your first impressions? What stands out to you?

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Mission 119: Search Matthew and listen to the commentary for Matthew 14-15.

Day 1 – An Execution and a Meal

As opposition to God's kingdom intensified with the death of John the Baptist, Matthew recorded some of Jesus' most powerful displays of compassion and divine authority in this chapter. He fed thousands in the wilderness, walked upon the stormy sea, and received the disciples' worship as the Son of God. Throughout this chapter, Jesus revealed He was far more than a miracle worker - He was the promised Messiah, the compassionate Shepherd, and the Lord over all creation. As you study this week, pay close attention to what each event revealed about who Jesus was, and consider how growing in your understanding of Him should lead you to greater faith, trust, and worship.

Matthew 14:1-21

1) What reports was Herod the tetrarch hearing about Jesus? What conclusion did he draw about who Jesus was? (v.1-2)

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2) Read Mark 6:14-29. What additional details did Mark include that help you better understand Herod's actions and the circumstances surrounding John's death?

3) Reread Matthew 14:5; then read Mark 6:20. What internal conflicts do you see Herod battling? (v.1-2)

4) What fears and pressures led Herod to order John's execution? (v.6-10)

5) Why do you think Jesus withdrew after hearing about John's death? What might this reveal about His humanity and His awareness of what lay ahead for Him? (v.13)

6) How did Jesus respond to the crowds that followed Him as He sought solitude to grieve? (v.14)

7) As the evening approached, what did the disciples suggest to Jesus? What did their response reveal about how they viewed the situation? (v.15)

8) Reread Matthew 14:18-21 and recount the miracle that unfolded. Then read John 6:1-15. What additional details did John include that help explain the significance of this miracle?

9) Read Mark 6:50-52. Note it said the disciples "did not understand about the loaves."

   a) What truth about Jesus were they still missing after the feeding miracle? (v.33) _____

   b) How did walking on the water help complete the picture for the disciples?

10) The day after this miracle, Jesus explained its deeper meaning (John 6:22-59). According to Jesus, what was the miracle ultimately pointing people toward?

Day 2 – The Lord of the Storm

1) After Jesus sent the disciples ahead to the boat and dismissed the crowd, what did He do? (v.22-23)

2) Read Mark 6:48. What did Jesus know about the disciples' situation before He came to them? How did this add to Matthew's account?

3) In Matthew 14:25 we read Jesus met the disciples out on the water shortly before dawn. Some translations reported He came “in the fourth watch.” This referred to the time between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. By this point, the disciples had likely been battling the wind for many hours before Jesus came to them. What does knowing the disciples had been struggling for many hours before Jesus came to them add to your understanding of this account?

4) When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, how did they respond? What did they think they were seeing? (v.26)

5) How did Jesus respond to their fear? What three things did He tell them? (v.27)

6) What did Peter ask Jesus to allow him to do? What did Peter's request reveal about his confidence in Jesus? (v.28-29)

7) After Peter got out of the boat and began walking on the water, what caused him to begin sinking? (v.30)

8) When Peter cried out for help, how did Jesus respond? What did Jesus' response reveal about Him? (v.30-31)

9) After witnessing this miracle, what did the disciples declare about Jesus? (v.32-33)

10) When they arrived on the other side and landed at Gennesaret, what familiar scene began to unfold? (v.34-36)

11) **Is there anything in this chapter new to you?

Day 3 - Connecting the Dots…

1) Reread Matthew 14:1-12. How did Herod's opposition to John the Baptist illustrate the ongoing conflict between God's kingdom and the kingdoms of this world? Where else have you seen this pattern throughout Scripture?

2) Throughout Israel's history, God's prophets were often rejected or killed for speaking the truth. What do you read in each of these Scriptures?
   a) 2 Chronicles 24:20-22
   b) Jeremiah 26:20-23
   c) Hebrews 11:32-40

3) How did John the Baptist's death fit into this larger biblical pattern, and what did it foreshadow about Jesus' own ministry?

4) After hearing of John's death, Jesus withdrew to a solitary place and fed the crowd in the wilderness. (v.18-20) Read Exodus 16.
   a) How did Jesus' feeding of the five thousand remind you of God's provision of manna in the wilderness?

b) What differences show Jesus was greater than Moses? _____

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5) Read Isaiah 25:6–8 and Matthew 26:26–29. In Matthew 14, Jesus fed a crowd with bread and fish. At the Last Supper, He offered His own body and blood as the true source of life. What did these meals teach us about the difference between the temporary needs Jesus met and the eternal need He came to satisfy?

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6) Read Job 9:8 and Isaiah 43:16. The Old Testament repeatedly described God alone as the One who ruled the sea and walked upon the waves. Matthew presented Jesus doing exactly that. What did these passages reveal about God's authority over the sea? How did Jesus' walking on the water help us understand who He truly was?

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7) When Jesus said, "Take heart; it is I; do not be afraid" (v.27), the Greek is literally *ego eimi* ("I am"). While the phrase can simply mean, "It's me," it may also echo God's self-revelation in the Old Testament.

a) Read Exodus 3:13–15. How did God identify Himself to Moses? _____

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b) How might this passage deepen your understanding of Jesus' words in Matthew 14:27? _____

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8) Read the following Scriptures. What did God repeatedly tell those who followed Him?

a) Genesis 26:24 _____

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b) Joshua 1:9 _____

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c) Isaiah 41:10 _____

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9) Compare Jesus' words in Matthew 14:27 with God's promises throughout the Old Testament. What does this repeated message teach you about God's character?

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Day 4 – Walking the Way of Jesus

1) Herod recognized that there was something extraordinary about John and Jesus, yet he never responded with repentance or faith. How can you guard against being interested in Jesus without actually surrendering your life to Him?

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2) **When Jesus heard about John's death, He withdrew to a solitary place. But this solitude was quickly interrupted by the crowds that followed Him. Despite grieving, Jesus had compassion on them and healed their sick. Often we see divine appointments as interruptions to our plans. What can you learn from Jesus' response here? (v.13)

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3) **Throughout the Gospels, Jesus performed miracles for a variety of reasons - sometimes revealing His identity and sometimes to teach. But in Matthew 14:14 we read that He healed the sick because He had compassion on them. When have you felt God's compassionate care in your life? When have you given compassionate care?

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4) **The five loaves and two fish may have seemed insufficient to feed five thousand, but Jesus was able to accomplish far more than we could through what we place in His hands! What time, talent, or treasure have you given to God and seen Him multiply far beyond what seemed possible?

5) Do you have any time, talents, or treasures that feel too meager for God to use? Take a moment to pray and consider what He might be asking you to give Him in faith!

6) Jesus willingly interrupted His rest to care for the needs of others (v.14), yet He returned to solitude as soon as He could. (v.23) What does this teach you about balancing compassionate service with time spent alone with God?

7) **The disciples had been struggling against the wind for hours before Jesus came to them on the water. What does this account teach you about Jesus' care for His people when His help seems delayed? How might that change the way you respond in your own seasons of waiting?

8) Peter knew he couldn't walk on water by his own ability, but he trusted that Jesus' command would also provide what was needed to obey it. (v.28-29) How does Peter's example encourage you to respond when Jesus calls you to something that feels beyond your own strength?

9) As the wind and waves overwhelmed Peter, his fear caused him to shift his focus from Jesus to his circumstances. Yet when Peter cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out and took hold of him. When life's circumstances threaten to overwhelm your faith, what did Jesus' response to Peter teach you about His character and the way He responds when you cry out to Him?

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10) **Many who came to Jesus experienced physical healing, but not everyone embraced Him as the promised Messiah. How can you make sure your faith is rooted in who Jesus is - not just in what He can do for you?

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11) Throughout this chapter the disciples' understanding of Jesus continued to grow until they worshiped Him and confessed, "Truly you are the Son of God." How has your understanding of Jesus grown over time? Is there an area where He's inviting you to move from merely admiring Him to worshiping Him?

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12) **What key point did you learn this week about walking the way of Jesus?

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Day 5 - What Do You Think?

"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6:33, NIV)

Today, read chapter 14 with a seeking posture, and be attentive to where God is forming your heart, reordering your priorities, and inviting you into His kingdom life. As you do, take time to reflect on how God's living Word is at work in your life.

Use the questions below to notice where you sense His invitation, conviction, or encouragement. You do not need to answer every question each week. Instead, choose two or three that stand out and spend time with them. Pay attention to where God is leading you toward deeper trust, understanding, and transformation.

1) What part of God's redemptive story became larger, stranger, or more beautiful after studying this chapter?

2) **What insights gained from this chapter challenged you to think or act differently?

3) Where do you see yourself in this story? Are you the hero, someone in the crowd, or someone in need of the grace being revealed?

4) **What part of God's kingdom seemed upside-down in this passage compared to the kingdom of this world?

5) Did any mystery remain unresolved after reading this chapter? Rather than solving it, how might living with that mystery deepen your trust in God?

6) **What invitation did Jesus extend here to experience transformation in your life?

7) If we lived out the truths we've read about in this chapter in our families, workplaces, churches, and neighborhood - what might become more beautiful about our community? What might become uncomfortable?