

# Life Group Questions

## *Kingdom Power – a sermon series in Matthew 8-10*

What Weighs on You? / Pastor Ray Harms-Wiebe / Matthew 10:1-15 / Nov. 13/14, 2021

To the Life Group leader: thank you for your ministry leading this Life Group. **Take time to review the questions, selecting those you believe will be most helpful for your group study.** You will not have time to use all the questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you lead, as you select questions, and as you guide the discussion. As a team, we're praying for the Holy Spirit to guide you, lead you and speak through you.

We are motivated by what burdens us. Some of us are concerned about climate change. If we are, we are making all kinds of adjustments to lessen our carbon footprint. Some of us are weighed down by our family situation. Some of us are burdened by health concerns. Some of us are concerned about our financial situation. What weighs on you today?

What weighed on Jesus? Jesus said the people were like sheep without a shepherd. The sheep are harassed (troubled, worried, bewildered) and helpless (exhausted, can't get up, can't rescue themselves). This weighed on Jesus. My prayer is that through this week's study we will receive the burden Jesus carries.

## Reconnect

Come together with these preliminary questions:

- What issues weigh you down?
- Another way to ask the question is, "what issues do you lose sleep over?"
- Are you "weighed down" by the struggles of people around you?

## Open in Prayer

Invite God to speak into the lives of your group through His Spirit, through His Word, and through each other.

## Message Recap

**Review the message using these questions**

1. What stood out to you most in this week's message?
2. What was the most meaningful thing you heard in the message? Why?
3. What questions are still lingering?

## *Choose discussion and application questions*

**1) Go under my authority. I have all authority in heaven and on earth.**

Matthew 10:1 *And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.*

- a) What are the implications of the disciples being sent out with Jesus' authority?

- b) What are the implications of Jesus' giving us authority to minister to others?
  - i) How is Jesus' authority conferred on us?
  - ii) How do you know that you, as a Christ-follower are living and serving in Jesus' authority?

Pastor Ray said, "In this passage, the Twelve seem to represent all who follow Jesus. The word "apostle" simply means "sent one" or "envoy." All who follow Jesus are sent by him. Most commentators agree that the principles laid out in this passages are for all disciples, in every generation, including us.

The Twelve were common people like you and me. If God could transform their lives, he can transform ours as well. If God could use them, he can use us!"

## 2) Go with your team. I will transform you along the way.

Matthew 10:5-6 *These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, <sup>6</sup> but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

Jesus first set of instructions to the disciples was to:

- Go to the Jews (the Gospel came first to the Jews)
  - This was a training assignment.
  - The disciples were likely not ready to go to the Gentiles. It was too big a jump for them at this time.
- a) Jesus has given every Christ-follower "assignments" to express his kingdom mission to the world.
    - i) If you are reluctant to step on in God's mission what is the first step you could take? As a group leader spend some time "brainstorming" with your group to put together a list of options for people.
    - ii) You may need to spend some time discussing how comfortable people are in stepping out in ministry either in church or in the community. Don't assume everyone is ready and willing to serve.
  - b) Ask people want kind of training or guidance they would like to help them step into ministry. Pass on training ideas/requests to Pastor Brad or Willy. [bbates@willingdon.org](mailto:bbates@willingdon.org) [wreimer@willingdon.org](mailto:wreimer@willingdon.org)
  - c) Jesus had a greater mission in mind for the disciples which the disciples engaged in following Pentecost.
    - i) What is God's greater mission in the world?
    - ii) What is he calling all of us to be involved in?
    - iii) How can we be involved in that mission?

## 3) Live according to your specific everyday assignment.

Matthew 10:7-8 *And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'<sup>8</sup> Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons.*

Pastor Ray said, "In chapter 10, Jesus called the disciples to himself - to be with him, to know him. Then he sent them out to carry on his ministry. This is our "reason for being" as a church family: 'To know Jesus Christ personally and to carry on his ministry.'"

Our specific assignment from Jesus grows out of our general assignment from Jesus. What is our general assignment? To be with Jesus and to know him.

- a) What are your rhythms or habits of being with and knowing Jesus better?
  - i) How do spend time with Jesus?
  - ii) What are you doing to increasingly know his heart, hear his voice and follow his leading?
  - iii) What are you doing to increasingly "know" Jesus?
    - (1) How do your relational habits of getting to know people better apply to getting to know Jesus better?
- b) Jesus told his disciples to tell people that the kingdom of God is at hand, to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers and cast out demons.
  - i) How do you feel about being given that assignment?
  - ii) What did Jesus mean when he told his disciples to proclaim, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand?"
    - (1) What is the kingdom of heaven?
    - (2) How would you explain what the kingdom of God is if you were asked to today?

- (3) Jesus describes the supernatural signs of God's kingdom in vs. 8.
- (a) Does God still reveal himself in supernatural ways today?
  - (b) Share any experiences you've had with God's supernatural work in the world.

**4) Share the good news joyfully. I will minister through you.**

Pastor Ray said, "We too are everyday people, called by Jesus to advance the kingdom of God in a sometimes alien and hostile world today. Sometimes we are honored, sometimes we are dishonored, but the commission remains the same."

Jesus gave the disciples specific instructions as to how they were to go. Matthew 10:8b-10, *You received without paying; give without pay. <sup>9</sup> Acquire no gold or silver or copper for your belts, <sup>10</sup> no bag for your journey, or two tunics or sandals or a staff, for the laborer deserves his food.*

- a) Jesus told them to go without money, food, or clothes.
  - i) Why do you think Jesus sent them that way?
  - ii) What would they have learned going without any resources other than the Gospel?
- b) Have you ever sensed that Jesus was sending you to do something that you knew you didn't have the resources needed to accomplish the task?
  - i) How did it go?
  - ii) What did you learn?
  - iii) How did the experience impact your faith?
  - iv) Think back to your experiences. When have you sensed God working through you most profoundly?

**5) Trust me and share freely. I will take care of you.**

Matthew 10:11-13 *And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay there until you depart. <sup>12</sup> As you enter the house, greet it. <sup>13</sup> And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it.*

Jesus taught that the Gospel is something that is to be freely given and freely received. If people appreciate what God is doing through you in their lives, they may express their gratitude through a meal or a bed in the case of the disciples. We go without expectation of any "payment," any return on passing on the gift of the Gospel other than the joy of seeing God work in and through us.

- a) How have others blessed you with the Gospel or because of the Gospel?
  - i) Share your experiences with your group.
  - ii) Perhaps you have been blessed or impacted by others in your group. Use this opportunity to thank them for the impact they've had on your life.
- b) How does the act of sharing the Gospel express the heart of God?
  - i) How can we express God's grace to us through our relationships, finances, time, hospitality and, timely communication?

**6) Be ready to extend my peace to those who will receive you.**

Those who received the twelve received Jesus. Matthew 10:40 makes this explicit: *Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. By receiving the disciples, people were saying yes to God and his blessing!*

But, Jesus also says this to his first disciples. Vs. 13b *but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup> And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. <sup>15</sup> Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgement for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.*

Interestingly, Jesus does not tell the disciples to keep on pursuing the people who initially rejected the Gospel. Jesus didn't tell the disciples that they were failures if people rejected the Gospel.

- a) According to Matthew 10:1-15 what is our responsibility in going out with the Gospel?
- b) What are we not responsible for?

- i) Helpful hints to this question:
  - (1) Does Jesus hold the disciples responsible for how people respond to the Gospel? No.
  - (2) Does Jesus make demands on how they communicate the Gospel? No, but he modeled how to share the Gospel for the disciples.

Pastor Ray said, And then, a final word for followers of Jesus. What weighs on you today? If we are disciples of Jesus, we are sent ones. If we are sent ones, we must be burdened by people who do not know Jesus. This is the understanding of the entire New Testament. This is the Willingdon vision, "A family where everyone is on mission with Jesus."

- c) What is your role as one sent to be on mission with Jesus?
  - i) If you do not know your part in Jesus' mission, begin praying specifically for Jesus' leading in your life.
    - (1) Share your desire to discern Jesus' calling on your life with your life group.
    - (2) Ask the group to pray for you.
    - (3) Commit to praying daily for Jesus' leading and commit to walking in obedience to what you sense Jesus leading you into.
    - (4) Take the spiritual gifts test provided on the group leaders' website.  
<https://gifts.churchgrowth.org/spiritual-gifts-survey/>

#### Questions for Reflection:

1. What weighs on you today? Do you carry Jesus' burden?
2. Are you aware of your specific assignment? What is it?
3. Who is Jesus asking you to bless with his peace (today, this week)? How will you bless them (a visit, the message of Jesus, an encouraging word, a prayer, a gift, an action)?

## Choose Your Next Step

#### What next step will you commit to for the upcoming week (and beyond)?

If people have shared their desire to discern Jesus' leading in their lives, commit to following up with each other during the week. Call, text, or email each other words of encouragement, specific prayer requests, or answers to prayer.

## Closing Prayer

This may be a great week to split into either separate groups of men and women for prayer or to divide into groups of 2 or 3 for prayer. This will facilitate greater intimacy in prayer.