

# Life Group Questions

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

**Do We See What Jesus Sees?** / Pastor Ray Harms-Wiebe / Matt. 9:35-38 / Nov. 6/7, 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.

Sight is an indispensable sense. But even if our eyes work, we might not truly see. We often miss the big picture, the work that God is doing. We can get caught up with our eyes focused on the things right in front of us, or we are focused on ourselves at the expense of the people around us. Without God's intervention, we may see with our eyes but be blind to what He is doing and what He calls us into. Today's study explores what it means to see the world through "spiritual eyes."

## Reconnect

Come together with these preliminary questions:

- Have you ever experienced people who work against what you are trying to accomplish?
- How did you handle the resistance?

## 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) **Do you see what Jesus sees?**

Matthew 9:34-35<sup>34</sup> But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons."

Pastor Ray said, "There is a battle raging for the people of Galilee and beyond. We should not be surprised by the resistance Jesus experiences. The region is described in this way in chapter 4:16: "those dwelling in darkness"; "those dwelling in the region and shadow of death." Jesus faces resistance from his environment (his family, his hometown, and the religious culture) and is opposed by the spiritual realm.

- a) Pastor Ray continued by describing the battle between good and evil in our day. "How do we see Metro Vancouver? Cities maximize human potential for both good and evil. The city is always a battlefield. We

see the good: schools, hospitals, neighborhoods, jobs, sports clubs, and churches. We also see evil: education that removes God from the curriculum, drug trafficking, sex trade, political corruption, economic disparity, racism, and gangs.”

- i) How do you process the spiritual battle in our world?
  - (1) Do you believe that Satan has an active agenda in our city?
- ii) John 10:10 says, “The thief (Satan) comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”
  - (1) What is Satan’s agenda as stated in this verse?
  - (2) How does he accomplish his agenda in our city and country today?
- b) How did Jesus respond to opposition?

Matthew 9:35 And **Jesus went** throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.
- c) Immediately after Jesus faced criticism from the Pharisees, we read that Jesus went throughout the land teaching, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and affliction. He obviously was not deterred by the criticism and opposition of the Pharisees. He was also not preoccupied with the opposition of Satan.
  - i) Why do you think he simply continued his mission instead of dealing with the opposition?
  - ii) What can we learn from Jesus in dealing with opposition to our faith and to God’s mission in the world?

Jesus’ focus was on the mission his Father had given him. Jesus’ word to us is the same as it was to his disciples, John 20:21 “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” Jesus never asks us to do anything he is not willing to do or has not done. He has already gone to Vancouver – has gone ahead of us (this is one of the great truths of evangelism). We accompany his work. Mission begins with Jesus.

## 2) Follow Jesus by... Going

When Jesus passed on what is known as the Great Commission he said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...” Matthew 28:19. This verse is more literally translated, “as you are going...”. Jesus was not focused on the opposition or challenges he faced; he was focused on the grand kingdom story his father was writing. He was focused on living in the authority and mission of his Father and teaching us to live with the same mindset and agenda.

- a) Are you more focused on the obstacles to your faith or on the resources God has given to you?
- b) How do we come to see the world the way Jesus does?
  - i) Matthew 9:36 tells us that, When he [Jesus] saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.
    - (1) What do you see when you look at the “crowds?”
      - (a) Do you have compassion? Do you see people who are “harassed and helpless”, or do you just see a crowd? Be honest with yourself and your group.
      - (b) If you simply see a crowd, ask Jesus to give you his eyes for people.

## 3) Follow Jesus by... Seeing

Pastor Ray said, Jesus saw men, women and children, tax collectors and sinners, religious and irreligious, intellectuals and fishermen. He saw everyone. When he went to Sychar, a small town in Samaria, he looked. The disciples only saw their stomachs and went to town to find lunch. Jesus saw a Samaritan woman who needed living water. He saw Samaritans who did not know why they were alive. They did not know the Father’s love. It is in Sychar that Jesus says to his disciples: “Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest” (John 4:35).

- a) Do you see “fields that are ripe for the harvest?”
  - i) Jesus spent 75% of his time with people who were not yet his disciples. What percentage of your intentional relational time is spent with people who do not believe in Jesus?

- (1) Do you have compassion for those who do not know Jesus?
  - (2) Do you pray for people in your relational world who do not know Jesus?
  - (3) Do you look for opportunities to share your faith with people you care about who do not know Jesus?
- b) Pastor Ray said that Jesus was deeply moved when he saw people who were suffering spiritually, mentally, emotionally, relationally, and physically. He wanted to embrace, love, serve, care for and shepherd.

In Matthew, compassion entails not only sympathy, but practical action; not just a fleeting emotion, but committed, caring action. The best antidote to the influence of evil in the city is love. As a church family, we must be a compassionate presence in Metro Vancouver.

- i) How can Willingdon Church be a “compassionate presence” in Metro Vancouver?
- ii) What part do you or could you play in being a “compassionate presence”

#### 4) Follow Jesus by... Loving

Matthew 9:37-38, <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; <sup>38</sup> therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

- a) What does Jesus tell us about the people who do not yet believe in Jesus?
- b) What does Jesus tell his disciples to pray for?
  - i) Why do you think we often pray for people to come to Christ (the harvest) rather than for more workers for the harvest?
  - ii) What is the difference between speaking in human authority and Jesus speaking with the authority of God, his father?
  - iii) How can we best develop more workers for the harvest?
  - iv) What is your role in the harvest?
    - (1) What could increase your participation in the harvest?

#### 5) Follow Jesus by... Praying

The order of this text is significant. In this text Jesus tells us to go, then see, feel compassion, then pray, then be sent. When you go, don’t be surprised by some resistance.

- a) What stops us from “going?”
  - i) Fear? Lack of faith? Mistrust? Resistance? Don’t see the need?
  - ii) If you have been involved in “going” share your experiences with the group.
- b) Jesus encourages us to pray for workers in Matthew 9:38 and Luke 10:2. Would you be willing to set a daily reminder for yourself, at 9:38 or 10:02, so that you will be encouraged to pray for workers every day?

## Choose Your Next Step

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

### □ Individual

- Do you have behaviors or attitudes that are stopping you from following Jesus into “danger?” If yes, confess those to God.
- If you are unsure if you have any areas of your life that are not submitted to Jesus, ask the Holy Spirit to show them to you.
- Ask Jesus to forgive you for not trusting him in the “danger.”
- Commit each area of your life that you have held back from Jesus to him. Ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit to walk in trust of Jesus' rule every day.

□ **Christian Community**

- Tell a trusted friend where you sense God calling you to step into “danger” and ask them to pray for you as you seek to trust and follow God in these areas.
- Reach out to your Christian community to talk through the things that pull you away from God and his ways. Ask the group to pray for you and tell them how they can support you in your walk with Jesus.

□ **The world**

- Ask God to guide you as you bring his kingdom wherever you go.
- Ask God for discernment to see where this earthly kingdom is in conflict with God’s kingdom and how you can live out God’s priorities in your world.

## Closing Prayer

A closing prayer is an effective way to point people back to our Loving Father as they seek to apply their new learnings throughout the week. If we remain connected to the power of the Holy Spirit, He will remind us of His call for us and give us the strength to follow through. Ask group members to share what they sense God calling them to. Pray for each other and commit to continue to do so during the week as people step out in obedience to God’s leading.