

Small Group Guide

WORSHIP THE KING

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

March 18, 2012

Matthew 13:53-14:36

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to train your group into potential disciple-makers and lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word with His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.

Review—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. (The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time.) Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to review the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.

Prayer—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications for our lives. (As a training tool, leaders might want to have various members summarize the teachings in their own words each week sharing how they think the Scripture applied to the original hearers and how the principles apply to us today.)

Message Outline

WORSHIP THE KING Matthew 13:53-14:36

Two Pictures of Unbelief...

- Jesus' hometown...
 - They heard His words.
 - They saw His works.
 - They denied Him worship.
- Herod the tetrarch...
 - A flashback to John the Baptist's beheading.
 - A foreshadowing of Jesus' crucifixion.

Two Pictures of Belief...

- Faith in the face of need...
 - Reflect His compassion.
 - Rely on His resources.
 - Jesus meets needs in us.
 - He is the new Moses.

Small Group Guide

WORSHIP THE KING

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

March 18, 2012

Matthew 13:53-14:36

- He is the greater prophet.
 - He is the Messianic host.
 - Jesus meets needs through us.
- Receive His blessing.
- Faith in the face of fear...
 - Jesus is sovereign over you.
 - Jesus is interceding for you.
 - Jesus is present with you.
 - Jesus is strength in you.
 - What matters most is not the measure of your faith.
 - What matters most is always the object of your faith.
 - Jesus is peace around you.

The Picture of Worship...

- Fall at the feet of the One who saves the perishing.
- Feast at the table with the One who satisfies the hungry.

Message Summary

What we believe about Jesus affects everything about how we worship Him. Matthew 13:53-14:36 presents two pictures of unbelief – the people of Jesus’ hometown and Herod Antipas, and as a result of their unbelief, they neither recognized Christ as Lord nor submitted their lives to Him. In contrast, Matthew 14 displays two pictures of belief by focusing on Jesus’ relationship with the disciples who did trust in Him and by focusing on their responses to Him in times of need and fear. Through the feeding of the 5,000 Jesus demonstrates compassion for the crowd, His sufficiency in their circumstances, and His ability to meet needs in and through His followers. Just as the disciples were extensions of Christ’s mercy and miraculous power to the crowd, Christ desires to use us to show His mercy and power to others. After this miracle, Jesus sends the disciples across the sea where they get caught in a storm, and Matthew presents Christ as sovereign over the situation, interceding for His people, present with His people, providing strength for His people, and bringing peace to His followers. When facing storms in life, God calls His followers to trust Him, to turn to Him, and to obey Him. Matthew communicates that in trials what is important is not *how much* faith you have but *who* your faith is in. Once you realize who Jesus is – the One who ultimately satisfies, the One who calmed the storm, and the One who walked on water, you realize how He deserves to be worshiped. Therefore, do not put your faith in the things of this world or in your circumstances. Trust in Him who saves and who satisfies.

Group Discussion

Use the following questions to help review the application of God’s Word to our Head (What does God want me to know?), to our Heart (What does God want me to desire/value?), and to our Hands (What does God want me to do?).

- Pastor David stated, “Our worship of Christ is a reflection of our belief in Christ.” What does your life reflect about your faith? Are you satisfied with how you currently reflect Christ? Do you think He is pleased with where you are in your relationship with Him? How can you better reflect Him and worship Him this week?
- How does Matthew 14 illustrate the parables that occur in the previous chapter?
- In Matthew 13:53-58, the people in Jesus’ hometown saw His works and heard Him teach, yet they could not accept His claims. Think about the people in your life who have seen God’s work and heard the gospel yet deny Him worship. Take time as a small group to pray for their hearts to be softened and for the Holy Spirit to help them trust in Christ.
- John the Baptist boldly confronted Herod Antipas about his sin, which led to John’s imprisonment and death. There is an increasing cost to speaking truth and to challenging sin in this culture. What has following Christ cost you? Do you value your life and the comforts you currently enjoy more than you value obedience and faithfulness to Christ? What are ways in which you are standing for Christ,

Small Group Guide

WORSHIP THE KING

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

March 18, 2012

Matthew 13:53-14:36

confronting sin, and sharing truth? How can you support brothers and sisters in Christ who are standing for Christ at great personal risk?

- Herod Antipas had two moments in which he could have stood for truth and acted righteously – in sparing John the Baptist’s life (Matt. 14:1-12) and in advocating for Jesus’ release (Lk. 23:6-17), yet Herod Antipas responded passively in both situations, which led to the death of two men. His passivity and unbelief affected others because he feared the opinions and influence of others more than trusting God and acting morally. How often do you succumb to pressure at work, at school, and in your relationships and choose to be silent or to save face like Herod Antipas? How have such actions affected others? What does this indicate about your faith in Christ?
- Matthew 14 juxtaposes two meals – Herod’s feast and Jesus feeding the 5,000. Discuss the contrast between these two meals. What is the contrast between life in the world and a life that is connected to Jesus?
- Each of the four Gospels describe Jesus’ feeding of the five thousand (Mk. 6:30-44; Lk. 9:10-17; Jn. 6:1-15), but what does Matthew emphasize about this pericope that the other Gospel writers do not highlight? What is Matthew expressing about Jesus and His followers? How is this miracle a metaphor for how Jesus works? (Jesus alone is sufficient to meet the needs in us, yet He graciously uses us to meet the needs of others. Christ serves the disciples, and the disciples go and serve the crowds.)
- In instructing the disciples to feed the crowds (Matt. 14:16), Jesus was teaching His followers to obey even when they lack the power and the resources in order to show them their own insufficiency and His sufficiency. Discuss as a group a time when you recognized your own insufficiency and experienced His sufficiency in your own life. Take time to praise the Lord for His sufficiency and provision.
- Through the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus was teaching the Twelve to reflect His compassion. Define and describe examples of compassion. In reference to the beginning statement “Our worship of Christ is a reflection of our belief in Christ,” exhibiting compassion is one way that we as Christ-followers worship Christ and express our faith in Him. What does Matthew 14:12-14 indicate about Jesus’ situation and teach us about compassion? How can you demonstrate Christ-like compassion in your own life? Because Christ is compassionate, just, righteous, and merciful, He does acts of compassion, justice, righteousness, and mercy. As Christ-followers, do such characteristics of Christ describe both who we are and how we live by the grace of God?
- Immediately after this miracle in John 6, Jesus describes Himself as the Bread of Life. What does this mean? How is Jesus our bread? In the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus demonstrates He is the One who gives what satisfies, but in the teaching after the miracle, He expresses that *He* is the One who *is* what satisfies.
- Nothing can satisfy us apart from Christ. In your life right now, where are you seeking satisfaction? In your relationships? In your accomplishments and work? In your talents and abilities? In your money? Discontentment is a devastating and disgusting sin because the discontent individual wants something more than they want God and because it does not recognize God for who He is – good, sufficient, and sovereign. Therefore, discontentment erodes worship. If you are feeling discontent, what is at the root? Do you doubt God’s goodness? Are you trying to be the one in control of your life, manipulating circumstances to get the results you want? Are you greedy for more than what God has provided, even though He has provided for your deepest need and lavishly blessed you? Do truly believe that He is enough for you? Are you scared of what He might call you to if you do become content in Him in your current situation? If you are discontent, take time to examine the root of your discontentment and confess your sin to God.
- Why is it significant that the feeding of the 5,000 presents Jesus as the new Moses (see Ex. 15; Jn. 6:32) and the greater prophet (see 1 Kings 4:42-44; 17)?
- In Matthew 14:13-21, Jesus was surrounded by urgent physical and spiritual need, and we are surrounded by desperate needs in our immediate community, in metro Birmingham, and in the world. As a small group, identify 3-4 needs in Birmingham. Pray and brainstorm as a group ways in which you could help meet those needs. Recognize that Christ stands ready to meet the deepest needs of souls and to use our lives with all the resources at *His* disposal. Think big – not just what *you* can do to meet the needs listed but what *God* could do if His people would willingly step out in faith in Him and obedience to Him. What hinders you from allowing Christ to use you to meet the physical and spiritual needs of others?

Small Group Guide

WORSHIP THE KING

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

March 18, 2012

Matthew 13:53-14:36

- In Matthew 14:22-33, Jesus sent the disciples in the boat across the sea, knowing that they would face a storm. What are Scriptural reasons for why God allows us to face storms in our lives? Point to specific verses/passages.
- Faith in Christ involves recognizing that Jesus is sovereign over you. What does it mean for Him to be sovereign (see Rom. 8)? How does your life reflect faith in God's sovereignty? You cannot praise God in the midst of trials if you do not trust Him and if He is not your source of peace. How does the knowledge of Christ's sovereignty, of His intercession for you, of His presence with you, of His strength, and of His peace shape the way that you view trials in your life? How have you seen it true for God to take the storms in your life and use them as a pathway to greater revelation of Himself in your life? Take time to praise Him for His attributes and for His sovereignty in permitting these trials in your life, and pray for the strength to be faithful.

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of today's study. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from this study?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from this study, what does God want you to desire/value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this study?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- What is going to be the most difficult aspect of this study to personally apply?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength to apply these truths, for personal needs, for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel, and for our weekly prayer focus as a church..

Weekly Prayer Focus ... (from our worship guide)

- *Pray for our lives: This week we gain further clarity of the deity and power of Christ. Pray that we would not reject Jesus as those in Nazareth did but that we would recognize his wisdom and power as being from the Father. Pray that we would recognize times when we need to withdraw and rest but that these times would not distract us from the greater work of God before us. Pray that we would have faith to follow Jesus wherever he calls us to go. Commit in faith to seek God's help and deliverance for every situation we might face.*
- *Pray for our city: This week we are praying for Covenant Community Fellowship Church, Frank Woodson, Pastor. We are also praying for the Lovelady Center, which is a transitional facility for women who are leaving domestic abuse, addiction, and prison. Many of the women who come to Lovelady also come with their children. At any time, the center may be housing, feeding, and servicing approximately 300 adults plus children.*

Small Group Guide WORSHIP THE KING

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

March 18, 2012

Matthew 13:53-14:36

- *Pray for our world: This week we are praying for our Brook Hills' student team serving in Quito, Ecuador. We are also praying for Brook Hills' Long-Term Missionaries Jayson and Ashley F. serving in East Asia. Their first year was spent doing language learning and integrating into their new culture. Recently, they moved and are settling into a new city where their main focus will be long-term church planting among an unreached people group. This year has been exciting for Jayson and Ashley as they welcomed their fourth child into their family.*