

**Discussion Questions for
The Gospel of Matthew by Curtis Mitch and Edward Sri**

Chapter 8 – Jesus’ Healings (8:1 – 9:34)

1. What is significant about the attitude of the leper who asks for healing? What does the way Jesus heals him teach us about Jesus and his power?
2. The authors note that the encounter with the centurion is the only place in Matthew’s gospel where the word “amazed” is used for Jesus’ response. Why is Jesus amazed in this encounter? According to the box on page 127, what is the importance of our echoing the words of the centurion within the Mass?
3. How is the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law different than the other miracles of healing of this part of the gospel?
4. How is Jesus’ ministry of healing in general linked to the prophecy found in Isaiah 53?
5. What significance do the authors see in Jesus’ asking those who wish to follow him to “cross to the other side” and to “let the dead bury their dead”?
6. How is the account of the storm at sea more serious than it seems in relation to both the storm itself and Jesus’ rebuke of the wind and waves? How can the “great calm” that ensued be a message of consolation for us?
7. How do the details of the account of casting out demons in the territory of the Gadarenes show Jesus’ supreme authority, both regarding what is perceived as unclean and as different from other exorcists (see box on 132)?
8. Why does Jesus’ healing of the paralytic cause such controversy? What does it reveal to us about the deeper meaning of his healing ministry?
9. Why is the call of Matthew a scandal for his contemporaries and a source of hope for us? What is the meaning of “I desire mercy, not sacrifice”?
10. As Jesus continues to heal the hemorrhaging woman, Jairus’ daughter, and the blind and mute men, how does the reaction of the crowd differ from that of the scribes and Pharisees? What does this suggest about the human heart and how we see and judge external actions?

Chapter 9 – The Mission of the Twelve (9:35 – 10:42)

1. How is Matthew’s expression that Jesus was moved with pity for the crowds because they were like sheep without a shepherd linked to the prophecy in Ezekiel 34 and its fulfillment?
2. What is the significance of the appointing of 12 apostles? What kind of authority does Jesus entrust to his apostles?
3. Why, if Jesus has come to save the whole world, does he direct his apostles not to go to the pagans or Samaritans?
4. Why does Jesus ask his apostles not to carry basic provisions with them? What do the commands to announce peace and to shake the dust from their feet signify regarding the mission of the apostles?

5. What kinds of persecution does Jesus predict will come for his apostles? What is the meaning of being as “shrewd as serpents” and “simple as doves” in their response to persecution?
6. Jesus seems to contradict himself since in the Sermon on the Mount he declared the peacemakers blessed, and here he says he has come to bring not peace but the sword. How is this seeming contradiction explained by the authors?
7. What do the authors point out as the significance of this first reference to the cross? What does it reveal about the life of discipleship and following of Jesus?

Chapter 10 – John the Baptist and Jesus the Messiah (11:1 – 30)

1. When questioned about whether he is “the one to come,” Jesus lists the many works he has done. What is the deeper significance of this list in relation to the prophecies found in Isaiah about the Messiah?
2. When Jesus questions the crowd about John the Baptist, he is going beyond an inventory of their own hopes. How are his questions linked to prophecies of the Old Testament, and how does John fulfill those?
3. What does Jesus’ comparison of an evil generation to children wanting to hear the flute or to be sung a dirge reveal about the ministries of John and of Jesus and how people responded to them?
4. What is the significance of Jesus’ use of the phrase “woe to you” in reference to the towns which do not repent? What is the meaning of comparing Chorazin and Bethsaida to Tyre and Sidon? Based on the reflection section on page 158, why are these seemingly obscure passages important for us today?
5. What is the significance of Jesus’ addressing God as Father? Who are the childlike to whom the Father has revealed the mysteries of the kingdom?
6. What does this prayer of Jesus reveal about his relationship to the Father, and how does his relationship differ from ours?
7. When Jesus invites his disciples to come to him, what is the toil or burden that most are carrying? What is the “rest” to which he is leading them? In what sense is carrying the yoke of Jesus easy (see also the box on page 161)?