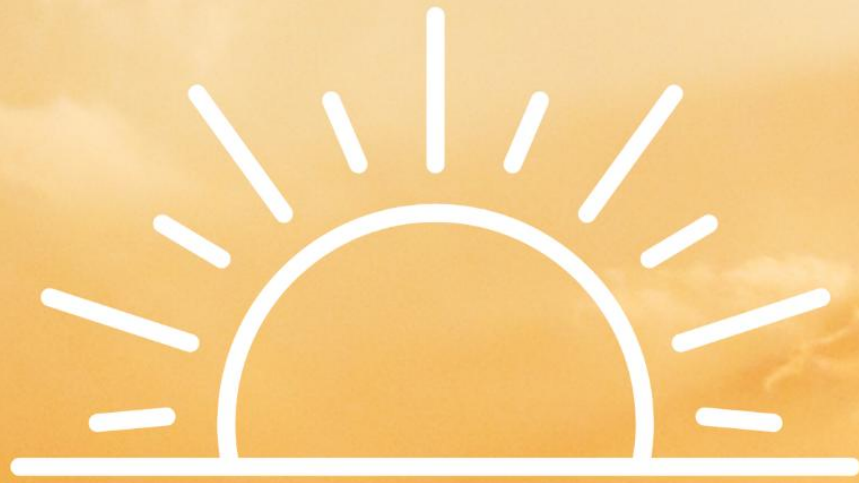




SEE THE SON

MATTHEW 14-17

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LETTER

Dear church,

The gospel is our message. The Son came in the flesh, was crucified for the sin of the world, and rose as eternal ruler over all creation. He gifts life to all who believe in him, restoring us to the Father and enabling us to live holy lives by the Spirit. Along with Christians throughout history, we recognise that Jesus is the centre of our faith, worship, and our very lives. This is why Christians have always kept coming back to the gospel, including us at WBC.

Digging into one of the gospels at the beginning of each year is a wonderful way to centre ourselves firmly on Christ for the months ahead. In Matthew 16:24 Jesus commands that anyone who wants to be his disciple must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him. Since the natural human tendency is always to go our own way, it is loving and gracious to continually remind each other who Jesus is and what it means to follow him.

As a newcomer to this church family I feel greatly privileged to be joining you all in time for this series. I'm excited to see how God works through his word and Spirit as we meet him in these few chapters.

Your brother in Christ,

Michael Parker

**...AND A VOICE FROM THE CLOUD
SAID, “THIS IS MY SON, WHOM I LOVE;
WITH HIM I AM WELL PLEASED.
LISTEN TO HIM!”**

MATTHEW 17:5B

SHARING JESUS – KEY DATES

12 FEB Evangelism Training Session 1

19 FEB Evangelism Training Session 2

22 MARCH Sourdough Saturday

29 MARCH Hope for the Illawarra

30 MARCH Your Life, But Better

6 APRIL Your Life, But Better

13 APRIL Your Life, But Better

20 APRIL Easter Sunday

23 APRIL 321

30 APRIL 321

7 MAY 321

14 MAY 321

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

Here we are back in Matthew for Term 1! Restarting in the middle of a book after a long gap may seem daunting, but the passages which make up our series actually form quite a nice narrative arc.

While Jesus has faced some adversity in the earlier chapters of Matthew, it's in this section that opposition to his words and actions really starts to ramp up. And this reflects one of the themes from Jesus' parables in Matthew 13. In these parables Jesus teaches that the kingdom of heaven is divisive, illustrating the good soil versus the bad soils in 13:1–23, the wheat versus the weeds in 13:24–30 and 36–43, and the good fish versus the bad fish in 13:47–50. The divisive nature of Jesus' teaching on the kingdom is summed up in 13:14–16,

¹⁵ For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes... ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.

The narrative from Matthew 13:53–17:13 sees this division play out in the different ways people take Jesus differently, from outright offense to recognition of his divinity. As you go through these verses, you'll be able to consider how different people viewed Jesus during his earthly ministry, compare it with how different people view Jesus today, and examine how you view Jesus yourself as you wrestle with what it means to see the Son!

SERMON NOTES – MATTHEW 13:53-14:12
9TH OF FEBRUARY

HOME GROUP STUDY - MATTHEW 14:13-36

What stood out to you from the sermon on Sunday? Did it encourage, challenge or comfort you? How did it impact your understanding of what it means to see the Son?

Have someone in the group share their testimony. When did you see the Son? How did it happen? What difference has he made in your life?

1. Who/what are the people/things you care most about? What lengths do you go to care for these?

Read Matthew 14:13–21

2. Which miracles does Jesus perform in this passage? What drives him to do them?
3. How does this passage make Jesus stand out from ordinary people who might also have compassion for the sick and hungry?
4. Previously, Matthew wrote that Jesus didn't do any miracles in his hometown because the people there lacked faith (13:58). What does this tell us about the people who have come to him here? And what does this suggest happens when we come to Jesus in faith?

Read Matthew 14:22–34

5. What parts of this passage are similar to the previous one? What parts are different?
6. Peter displays both faith and doubt. Does this resonate with your experience of following Jesus? If so, how?
7. How is Peter's doubt overcome? How could this example help when we doubt that Jesus is compassionate or powerful? What is it that we need to do?

Prayer

Things to praise God for...

Things to ask God for...

SERMON NOTES – MATTHEW 14:13-36

16TH OF FEBRUARY

HOME GROUP STUDY – MATTHEW 15:1-20

What stood out to you from the sermon on Sunday? Did it encourage, challenge or comfort you? How did it impact your understanding of what it means to see the Son?

Have someone in the group share their testimony. When did you see the Son? How did it happen? What difference has he made in your life?

1. What's a tradition you're a part of? How did it start? Why does it keep going?

Read Matthew 15:1–9

2. The Pharisees and the teachers of the law have had issues with Jesus' words and actions in the past, but what's their problem this time? Why do you think they're so concerned?
3. How does Jesus respond? What's his issue with the Pharisees? How does Jesus' accusation compare to the Pharisees'?
4. What does Jesus' teaching tell us about the relationship between human traditions and divine commands? How do you think God should be honoured?

Read Matthew 15:10–20

5. What's the point that Jesus is making? Why do you think he needs to make it?
6. In verses 13 and 14 Jesus describes the Pharisees as the blind leading the blind. Give some examples of people today who, like the Pharisees, are a danger to themselves and to others. How should we respond to them?
7. Jesus teaches that what comes out of our mouths comes out of our hearts. If this is true, what hope do we have of escaping defilement and pursuing holiness?
8. Have a look at what Jesus lists in verse 19 and discuss how people today might consider these things. Reflect on whether you need to repent of any that you see in your own heart.

Prayer

Things to praise God for...

Things to ask God for...

SERMON NOTES – MATTHEW 15:1-20

23RD OF FEBRUARY

HOME GROUP STUDY - MATTHEW 15:21-39

What stood out to you from the sermon on Sunday? Did it encourage, challenge or comfort you? How did it impact your understanding of what it means to see the Son?

Have someone in the group share their testimony. When did you see the Son? How did it happen? What difference has he made in your life?

1. Discuss a time someone included you in a group or activity. How did it make you feel?

Read 15:29–39

2. Compare verses 30–31 with Matthew 14:13–14. What is Matthew wanting to emphasise in this second feeding miracle?
3. Matthew mentions that the crowds “praised the God of Israel” (v31). What might they be thinking at this point? (see Isaiah 35:5–6).

Read 15:21–28

4. Who were the Canaanites and what was their relationship to Israel?

5. What is surprising about the title with which the woman calls out to Jesus?
6. How does this woman demonstrate her faith in Jesus? What is exemplary about her?
7. Why do you think Jesus avoids helping the woman three times? What does he mean by v24? (see Romans 1:16)
8. The scriptures make a big deal of the Gentiles' inclusion in God's plan of salvation. To what extent do we value and appreciate this inclusion?
9. It appears the disciples are less gracious and compassionate than Christ himself. When might we fall into such ways of thinking?

Prayer

Things to praise God for...

Things to ask God for...

SERMON NOTES – MATTHEW 15:21-39

2ND OF MARCH

HOME GROUP STUDY - MATTHEW 16:1-20

What stood out to you from the sermon on Sunday? Did it encourage, challenge or comfort you? How did it impact your understanding of what it means to see the Son?

Have someone in the group share their testimony. When did you see the Son? How did it happen? What difference has he made in your life?

1. Have you ever seen someone ignore a sign or warning? What happened?

Read 16:1-4

2. Read Matthew 12:38-40 and 1 Corinthians 1:22-24. Why do you think someone would ask for 'a sign'? What might they be hoping for and how would that 'test' Jesus?
3. What is the sign of Jonah that Jesus refers to? In what way does Jesus' ministry among the Jewish religious elite parallel Jonah's?

Read 16:5-12

4. In what ways is the Pharisees' and Sadducees' teaching like yeast? How might this warning have parallels in our world?

Read 16:13–20

5. What three titles does Peter report others see in Jesus? Why these figures? What's the significance of the titles that Peter sees in Jesus?
6. How did Peter come to his understanding (v17)? How does this contrast to how the Pharisees and Sadducees sought to understand him?
7. Whose church is it according to v18 and who is doing the building? What then is Peter's role and why is it significant?
8. How do you think the role of the church compares to the effect of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees? What part do we play as members of the church?

Prayer

Things to praise God for...

Things to ask God for...

SERMON NOTES – MATTHEW 16:1-20

9TH OF MARCH

HOME GROUP STUDY - MATTHEW 16:21-28

What stood out to you from the sermon on Sunday? Did it encourage, challenge or comfort you? How did it impact your understanding of what it means to see the Son?

Have someone in the group share their testimony. When did you see the Son? How did it happen? What difference has he made in your life?

1. How important is it to weigh things up before making a big decision? What might happen if you don't?

Read Matthew 16:1–23

2. What does Jesus tell Peter and the disciples? Why is he so against what he says?
3. How does this draw attention to what's in Peter's heart? (Mt 15:8–9 and 17–18)? What do you think he means when he talks about the concerns of God and the concerns of humans?

Read Matthew 16:24–28

4. What does Jesus mean in verse 24? What does this reveal about what it looks like to be a disciple of Jesus?

5. Jesus shows that deciding to be his disciple comes at a significant cost. Why is it important to consider this cost before becoming his disciple? Why do so many think it's not worth it? Why did you decide it *was* worth it?
6. Are there particular people at WBC you've noticed who deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Jesus? In what ways do you see them living as disciples of Jesus?
7. What has your life as a disciple of Jesus looked like so far? How have you denied yourself, taken up your cross and followed him? How could you be doing this even more?
8. Name some people in your life who need to know Jesus who you could invite to some (or all!) of the evangelistic events coming up (see page 4).

Prayer

Things to praise God for...

Things to ask God for...

SERMON NOTES – MATTHEW 16:21-28

16TH OF MARCH

HOME GROUP STUDY - MATTHEW 17:1-13

What stood out to you from the sermon on Sunday? Did it encourage, challenge or comfort you? How did it impact your understanding of what it means to see the Son?

Have someone in the group share their testimony. When did you see the Son? How did it happen? What difference has he made in your life?

1. How do you think different people might react if Jesus visibly reappeared to the world today?

Read Matthew 17:1–13

2. What happens to Jesus on the mountain? Put yourself in the disciples' shoes. What would you have been thinking and feeling?
3. What do you think is significant about Jesus' appearance when he is transfigured? What do you think is significant about the presence of Moses and Elijah?
4. What does the voice from the cloud say about Jesus in verse 5? How does this compare with the other ways people have viewed Jesus in this series? (see Matthew 13:54–57; 14:33; 15:12, 22, 30; 16:1–3, 13–16, 22).

5. As they're coming down the mountain, the disciples ask Jesus about Elijah's re-appearance before the Messiah comes (see Malachi 3:1, 3:17-4:6). What do you think it means that John the Baptist was Elijah? (see Matthew 11:1-11).
6. Now that the disciples have *seen* the Son in his transcendent glory, the Father commands them to listen to him. What do you think it means to *listen* to the Son?
7. Last week you discussed the people in your lives you could invite to WBC so that they too might see the Son. Have you had any conversations with them since then?
8. How has studying the verses in this series challenged your understanding of what it means to see the Son. In the weeks, months and years ahead, how can we help each other to listen to him?

Prayer

Things to praise God for...

Things to ask God for...

SERMON NOTES – MATTHEW 17:1-13

16TH OF MARCH

