

STUDY GUIDE

Matthew 14:1-21

“The Gospel of Mercy”

When he went ashore he saw a great crowd and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. Matt 14:14

- 1) Why did Jesus begin to withdraw from his public ministry in Matthew 14? What was the primary reason he did so? What things should we withdraw from in order to better focus on God?**

- 2) Matthew recorded the story of Herod, Herodias and John the Baptist to reveals things to be as they really are in the world. Discuss and share things of the world that are contrary to the Kingdom of God.**

- 3) “Sin” is mentioned more times than love, grace, mercy or joy. Why are we reluctant to address the issue of sin? What are the consequences of not dealing with sin?**

- 4) When Jesus wanted to be “by himself” he found a “great crowd” waiting for him and he responded by having “compassion on them.” Discuss the biblical definition and personal application of “compassion.”**

- 5) Why did Jesus command his disciples to provide food for the great crowd? Why does Jesus demand that we do what we consider to be impossible? What does that mean for you in terms of Jesus saying, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Matt 16:24)?**

- 6) “When we serve God and share Jesus with others we will face rejection and opposition.” Discuss where you see this in the world today and - share how you may have personally experienced this.**

- 7) Michael Wilkens wrote: “Rejection of God’s gospel message through his prophets has not ceased.” In what ways have we seen the rejection of God’s gospel message through his prophets in the church?**

- 8) Discuss the implications (personally and for the church) of the following quote:**

“Jesus had compassionate mercy on the crowds who followed him, even though many were shallow, self-centered thrill seekers whom He knew would reject Him only a short time later - and he also had compassionate mercy on those who opposed him and rejected him and ultimately killed him.”