

STUDY GUIDE

Matthew 16:1-2

“Sincere Faith and Selfish Signs”

*“An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign,
but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.” Matthew 16:4*

1) . Discuss and give examples of the statement: *“How we interpret what we see and hear is determined by what we want to believe, whether what we have seen or heard or believe is true or not.”*

2) The Pharisees were marked their self-righteousness and the Sadducees were marked by their self-indulgence. Where do we see these in our culture today? Where do we see these in the church today?

3) Why did Jesus respond to the Pharisees’ and Sadducee’ demand for a *“sign from heaven”* by talking about the weather? What was Jesus’s point in doing so? What should we do in response?

4) What is *“the sign of Jonah”*? Why did Jesus speak of it to the Pharisees and Sadducees? What does it mean for us today?

5) Why did the disciples have a difficult time understanding what Jesus taught them? Discuss the similarities and the differences that we share with the disciples in understanding or misunderstanding the teachings of Jesus.

6) Why did Jesus say: *“Beware of the leaven (yeast) of the Pharisees and Sadducees”*? Describe how and where we can see the *“leaven/yeast”* principle at work today.

7) Discuss the meaning and implications (personally and for the church) of the following quotes:

We must also be on our guard against the hypocritical pretense of "seeking the truth" by seeking “signs” – proofs, evidence and confirmation that validate and support our beliefs, our opinions, our positions, our rights, our feelings, our desires, our preferences, our behaviors, our expectations and our interpretations.

Self-indulgence and self-righteousness will blind us from truly seeing and knowing Jesus Christ.