

Day One – Recap of Matthew 9:18-34

As I'm sure you've discovered by now, a miracle story can actually accomplish a variety of things. They prove God's authority, demonstrate his compassion, provide evidence that He has fulfilled the Messianic expectations of a healer, give us hope for a day when disease will no longer plague this world, and even teach us to mimic Jesus and love the unloved. There may be a dozen more to explore, but I think one deserves mentioning at this point. Throughout the Gospels is a constant call from the author to believe. If you look carefully, you can almost pick up on a refrain of "So...what are you going to do with Jesus?" All the stories about Jesus are actual events in history, but they're also much more. We commune with Jesus through these stories. We are able to move from readers to actual characters, and so it is though we are witnessing these miracles and making up our mind about who Jesus really is.

Have you noticed Matthew's constant reference to the reaction of the people? He seems to say, "They chose this path," and "They chose that path," only to end up saying in the end: "Which path will you take?" We are witnessing the miracle stories and being shown Jesus' glory just as those who witnessed the miracles with their own eyes. Take some time and consider who you more resemble in the stories. Are you skeptical, like those at the funeral? Are you acting like a Pharisee, more concerned with your own agenda and glory than what Jesus is doing? Or, are you playing the part of the hero (besides Jesus, of course) in the story? The heroes of these stories are, in human terms, those who forget themselves and cry out to Jesus for mercy. Everyone else is, since I've been in the habit of quoting old music, "playing the fool." Are you the exception to this rule? (Forgive me, please.)

Day Two – Read 9:35 – 10:25

Mark the references to Jesus (or at least make a note of) and the verbs used to tell us what He is doing in verses 9:35-37.

What does this tell you about Jesus and his mission?

How would you apply this in our/your life today?

Day Three

Make a list of the twelve apostles listed here.

What were Jesus' instructions to them?

Read Matthew 4:17. Compare the message of Jesus to the twelve's message in 10:7.

How does the ministry they are given parallel Jesus' ministry in chapters 8-9?

Is this passage teaching that every disciple of Christ should minister according to these instructions? Explain.

Day Four

How were their needs to be met while on this mission? How does Jesus instructions compare to some of the teaching you hear today?

What determined if a house was *worthy*?

What was the result if it was not *worthy*?

Does this passage teach us anything concerning *ministers* and *those ministered to*?

Day Five

Who are the wolves? Look up other references to wolves in the bible.

What is the sheep's status among wolves?

What treatment were the apostles to expect?

How were they to respond?

Does this apply to us in our culture? How are you doing?

Day Six

If you are looking to go a little bit deeper in your understanding of the text for this week, try one of these resources:

<http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/index.php?action=getBookSections&cid=1&source=1>

<http://www.evangelibrary.org.uk/members/com/nt/jcr/mt/mat-Index.html>

Sermons Transcripts:

Ligon Duncan - http://www.fpcjackson.org/resources/sermons/matthew/matthew_vol_1-2/matthew_vol_1-2/index_Matthew_vol_1-2.html

Audio:

John Piper - <http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Sermons/ByScripture/14/>

S. Lewis Johnson - http://sljinstitute.net/sermons/new%20testament/gospels/matthew/matthew_master.html