



# Matthew: New King, New Kingdom

## Cell Notes 2020

### STUDY 4. Responding to a Mixed Reception

**Aim.** To understand how Jesus reacted to the different responses people had to his message of God's kingdom. And to think about how we should respond when people today have mixed responses to the gospel.

**You Will Need:** Copies of the sheet, cut up and in envelopes.

**To Start With:** Look at the quotes (separate page) about Kingdoms and try to match up the quote with its author/context. (*You may wish to have more than one set if your group is large.*) Cut them up and have people match the two halves (*N.B. You can make it a competition if that suits your group!* 😊)

#### Engaging the Text:

This study looks at how Jesus reacted to the mixed response he and his message of the kingdom received.

1. Read each of the following which bookend either side of our chapter and sum up the response to Jesus. Matthew 11.2–6; 11.20–24; 12.13–14; 12.22–24 & 13.54–58.

In response to this hostility Jesus told a series of parables about the kingdom. We will look at the less familiar ones. Read 13.24–33 & 44–50.

2. What are your immediate reactions to these parables?
  - Which do you most easily understand or identify with (and why)?
  - Which do you find hardest to access (and why)?
3. Why do you think Jesus chose to use so many different images or metaphors to talk about the Kingdom of God?
4. Read 13.34–43 & 51–52. How far does Jesus' commentary here help us understand the parables and why he told them?
5. Jesus used metaphors that spoke to his audience, but our context is different today. (Few of us are farmers, fishermen or bakers!) How far do you think they can still speak today or challenge our thinking about God's kingdom values? In what way?
6. Finally, in small groups or pairs, share which parable you find most encouraging and which you find most uncomfortable. Finish by praying for each other, asking God to reveal more of His own Kingdom priorities.



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### **Starter Activity Sheet. To cut up.**

Confucius	If one should desire to know whether a kingdom is well governed, if its morals are good or bad, the quality of its music will furnish the answer.
Shakespeare (Richard III)	A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!
Lion King (Mufasa)	Everything the light touches... is our kingdom. But a king's time as ruler rises and falls like the sun. One day, the sun will set on my time here, and will rise with you as the new king.
Frozen (Hans)	As thirteenth in line in my own kingdom, I didn't stand a chance. I knew I'd have to marry into the throne somewhere.
Virginia Woolf	Boredom is the legitimate kingdom of the philanthropic
Oscar Wilde	Our ambition should be to rule ourselves, the true kingdom for each one of us; and true progress is to know more, and be more, and do more.
Sun Tzu	The general who advances without coveting fame and retreats without fearing disgrace, whose only thought is to protect his country and do good service for his sovereign, is the jewel of the kingdom.
Nietzsche	The 'kingdom of heaven' is a condition of the heart – not something that comes 'upon the earth' or 'after death'.