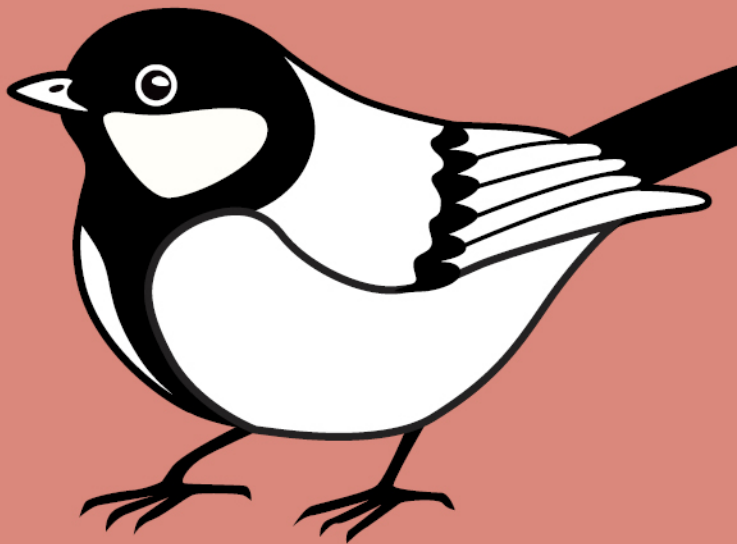


8 STUDIES
+ LEADER NOTES

MATTHEW 8-12

Fear and Freedom



PATHWAY
BIBLE GUIDES



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MATTHEW 8-12

BY PETER COLLIER



matthiasmedia
SYDNEY • YOUNGSTOWN

Fear and Freedom

Pathway Bible Guides: Matthew 8-12

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Before you begin

A good way to get to know the true character of someone famous is to find out more about their early years. Seeing what people were like before they became famous reveals a great deal about their true identity. It is exciting, too, going back to where everything began for them. You are transported back to the early days, recognizing the greatness that one day others will also see.

This is true in the case of Jesus.

Looking at the early days of Jesus' ministry gives us a sense of what lies ahead for him, and gives us a powerful insight into his character and appeal. This early glimpse is what we find in Matthew 8-12. These chapters provide us with an authentic opportunity to get to know Jesus and to understand who he is, what he did and what he demands of his followers. In these chapters, we see Jesus' fearsome authority and his tender compassion. We see him living up to the extraordinary Old Testament expectations, all based on God's promises about the coming Messiah. We see opposition beginning and hardening against him, and we witness his courageous response. We see his faultless integrity and hear him teaching his disciples. In short: we meet the real Jesus in his early ministry in a biography he authorized.

The other thing we find in Matthew 8-12 is a vast array of different responses to Jesus. He is loved, hated, feared, labelled, pleaded with, questioned. People leave their jobs because of him; people stake their reputations on opposing him. No-one can sit on the fence. This examination of Jesus' early years is confronting for us too, for Jesus always

demands a response. A right fear of Jesus' power and authority will lead, paradoxically, to true freedom.

It is my prayer that your examination of Jesus in these chapters will be genuine, and that your response to Jesus will be worthy of him.

1. Jesus: Before he was famous

MATTHEW 7:28-8:27



Getting started

When someone says of a celebrity, “I knew them before they were famous”, it immediately arouses our curiosity. Why do we like to know what famous people were like before they achieved their fame?

- b. What relationships do you have that may challenge Jesus for ‘top spot’? What should you do about this?
6. What else do we learn in the rest of this section about what it means to follow Jesus? (See, for example, 8:8-13 and 8:26.)



To finish

The disciples ask the question in 8:27, “What sort of man is this...?”

- How would your workmates or friends answer this question?

- What sort of man would you say Jesus was before he was famous?

- Given your answer, how should you act?



Give thanks and pray

- Give thanks for the fact that Jesus' authority is matched by his compassion.
- Pray that you would have faith in Jesus and be prepared to give priority to following him ahead of anyone else.
- Pray that our fear of what we might lose, in worldly terms, will not stop us from embracing the freedom Jesus offers.