

Small Group Study in the Book of Matthew
May 17, 2026

A suggested format for your group time

15 min – Fellowship

15 min – Prayer (using the four quadrants of the SG prayer sheet)

45 min – Study (see below)

Matthew 15:21-39

Passage Summary

Chapter 15: The Bread of Life Discourse

Jesus miraculously feeds a multitude of five thousand people with five loaves and two fish, demonstrating his power and provision. He then engages in a discourse with the Pharisees about the true Bread of Life, which he identifies as himself. He emphasizes the importance of faith in him – not just following religious rituals and laws – for obtaining eternal life. <https://biblewise.com/matthew-chapter-summaries/>

Jumpstart Questions

- Why do some kids have a hard time fitting in with other kids at school? Why do some kids have a hard time including others who do not fit in?
- Why do you think the Jews had a hard time including the Gentiles in the promise of the Kingdom of the Messiah?
- How did Jesus treat Gentiles? What does His treatment of “outsiders” say about the purpose and power of the gospel? Why is this good news for us? (**We too, can be included into His Kingdom!**)

Matthew 15:21-28

- What was significant about the regions of Tyre and Sidon? (**They were regions outside of Israelite territory**). Where does Matthew say the unnamed woman was from? (**A woman of Canaan**). What did she call Jesus and what was her request?
- Why do you think Jesus initially remained silent? How did the disciples respond to her cries? How did the woman react to the silence of the Jesus and the demand of the disciples to go away?
- What did Jesus say about her determined faith? Why did He consider her faith to be great? (**As a Gentile, she did not have the history, heritage, or hope of the people of God**).

Matthew 15:29-31

- How did Jesus treat the multitude of Gentiles who came to Him on the mountain surrounding the Sea of Galilee? What was Jesus demonstrating to His disciples concerning the Kingdom of God? (The Kingdom is for anyone who comes to Him!)
- Who are the “they” in verse 31? (**They are the multitude of Gentiles**). What did these Gentiles do once Jesus began healing the maim, lame, and blind? (**They glorified the God of Israel**).
- How do you think you would respond if you were an outsider fully welcomed into the family of faith? Why do you think some people have a hard time fitting in at Coral Hill? Do we have any cliques in our congregation? How can we make outsiders feel more welcomed into our fellowship?

Matthew 15:32-39

- How is this story like the story found in Matthew 14:13-21? How are they different? (**The multitude of 5,000 were primarily Jews; the 4,000 primarily Gentiles**).
- Even though the disciples had a front row seat to the feeding of the 5,000, why do you think they questioned how this crowd would be fed? What does this say about the slowness of their faith? Even though we too have seen everything Jesus has done in our lives, why do we demonstrate a slowness in our own faith?
- Do you believe the gospel is really for everybody? Who experiences the power of the gospel? (**Those who come to Jesus**). What is the responsibility of those on the inside towards those on the outside?

Practical suggestions:

1. Please feel free to modify any question and include other text-based questions that you might find helpful for your group to help them think through the passage - specifically questions that lead participants to make comments *based on the text* (not just to give opinions).
2. Invite group members to make other observations they see in the passage. Have them to identify the specific verse where that observation is made.
3. Ask what application can be made out of these verses that will help a person to put into practice the truths in the passage?
4. Ask for volunteers to read the various sections. **Make sure you know the person you are asking to read is comfortable doing so. Please don't just assume and put someone on the spot.*
5. Be intentional about including everyone into the conversation. Asking an 'open' question directed to a specific person who remains fairly quiet is one simple way of inclusion (in other words, a question that may not have a specific right or wrong answer). An example of an 'open' question is: *What's your favorite part of this passage? Why?*
6. Remain sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and make both ministry and teaching a priority of your group time together.