

Matthew *A New Perspective*

4. A New Hope Matthew 8-9

Aim of the Study: To consider how Jesus' ministry brought hope and how we might continue to be bringers of hope in our world today.

To start with (10 min):

- Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist?
- How would you define hope? How is it different from 'wishing'?

Hope: Dictionary definition is:

- *Noun - the feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out for the best.*
- *Verb - to look forward to with desire and reasonable confidence; to believe, desire, or trust: to feel that something desired may happen.*
- Is there a difference between **hope** and **hopefulness**? What is Christian hope?

Engaging with the text:

Read *Matthew 7.28-29* together

1. The following stories show the authority Jesus had, not just in wise teaching but also in changing situations. Give one of the following to each person and ask them to pick out:
 - In what way did Jesus show his authority? (eg. What did he have power over?)
 - In what way did he bring hope into that situation?

	Jesus' authority (power over)	How he brought hope
Matthew 8. 1-4		
Matthew 8. 5-13		
Matthew 8. 14-17		
Matthew 8.23-27		
Matthew 8. 28-9.1		
Matthew 9.2-8		
Matthew 9.9-13		
Matthew 9.18-26		
Matthew 9.27-31		
Matthew 9.32-38		

2. Having filled in the chart - what are people's observations about the effects Jesus has on people and situations?
3. Most Christians would say that they believe the gospel of Jesus still brings hope today.
 - What do you think we tend to mean by that?
 - What methods for bringing hope to people do you think we tend to be good at?
 - Honestly, do you think we tend to expect to see signs and wonders like this today? Why do you think that is the case? What effect does that have in your opinion?
 - When **have** you experienced (or heard stories) of a dramatic breakthrough such as those described here? What affect did that have?
 - Why do you think God doesn't always do something dramatic like these stories? How might we know when to ask for a dramatic healing or sign and when God wants to do something different?
4. Finally, read *Matthew 9.35-38* together. What does this tell us about Jesus' motivation, his authority and our role in bringing hope to others?



Spend some time praying:

- Perhaps people would like greater faith to pray for signs and wonders and wisdom to know when and how to pray.
- Perhaps there are specific situations they would like to see God's power move in.
- Perhaps there are areas where people feel hopeless and need God to give them hope that he can and will change a situation.