

Gospel of Matthew

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Suggested responses to questions about Matthew 10:1-42

Note: Be sure to respond to all the questions yourself before reading the suggested responses in order to make the most of this study.

1. The sons of Jacob numbered twelve. Genesis 35:22-26 lists their names: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.
2. In Matthew 10:1-4, Mark 3:14-19, and Luke 6:13-16, Peter's name appears first in the list of disciples. Judas Iscariot's name appears last. This indicates these two disciples' relative importance—Peter is the rock upon whom Jesus will build the Church, while Judas Iscariot is a traitor who betrays Jesus.
3. Genesis 25:19-28 recounts that Isaac and Rebekah were parents of twin sons—Jacob and Esau. In Genesis 32:24-28, Jacob wrestles all night with a mysterious stranger who asks: “What is your name?” And he said, ‘Jacob.’ Then he said, ‘Your name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.’ “The house of Israel” refers to the descendants of all 12 tribes of Israel—the families of the sons of Jacob. “The lost sheep of the house of Israel” are the 10 tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel who were deported to Babylon by the Assyrians seven centuries before the time of Jesus.
4. Sodom is where Abraham's cousin, Lot, chose to live. Genesis 13:13 describes the men of Sodom as “wicked,” and “great sinners against the LORD.” Genesis 18:20 describes the sins of Sodom and the nearby city Gomorrah as “very grave.” Genesis 19:1-24 recounts the story of two angels sent by God to Lot and his family, how the men of the city threatened to molest them, and how God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah with brimstone and fire from of heaven.
5. Jesus' instruction to his disciples in Matthew 10:16 to be “wise as serpents and innocent as doves” is reflected in St. Paul's teaching in Romans 16:19: “For while your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, I would have you wise as to what is good and guileless as to what is evil.”
6. “Son of man” is a messianic title. Daniel 7:13-14 records this prophecy: “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.” In the apostle John's vision in Revelation 1:13-16, he saw “in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden girdle round his breast; his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like

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a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters; in his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth issued a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.” The coming of the Son of man represents the Second Coming of Jesus.

7. Jesus tells his disciples in Matthew 10:27: “What I tell you in the dark, utter in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim upon the housetops.” Jesus’ teachings constitute his Gospel message. In the *Rome to Home* excerpt from one of his homilies, Pope John Paul II teaches that the Gospel contains within itself the power to overcome all opposition and to conquer the heart of every person of good will.
8. *Responses to this question will vary.* Some of the many New Testament passages that encourage Christians not to be afraid include—Luke 5:10 in which Jesus tells Simon: “Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men”; John 14:27 in which Jesus tells his disciples: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid”; and Acts 18:9 in which Jesus says to St. Paul: “Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man shall attack you to harm you; for I have many people in this city.”
9. In Ephesians 6:17, St. Paul refers to Scripture as a sword: “And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” In Hebrews 4:12, the author describes the word of God as “living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” After Jesus’ Passion, death, and Resurrection, the cross became a symbol of victory. Paragraph 550 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains: “The coming of God’s kingdom means the defeat of Satan’s. . . . The kingdom of God will be definitively established through Christ’s cross: ‘God reigned from the wood.’”
10. God the Father has sent Jesus, and Jesus sends his disciples. In Matthew 10:40, Jesus makes it very clear that to welcome him or his disciples is to welcome his Father. Jesus refers to his disciples as “little ones.” In Mark 9:35-37, Jesus tells his 12 disciples: “If any one would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.” Then Jesus takes a child in his arms and says: “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me.” In Mark 9:42, Jesus indicates there will be a severe penalty for those who lead children in the kingdom astray: “Whoever causes one of these little one who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung round his neck and he were thrown into the sea.”

Responses to the Questions for Reflection will vary.