

# THE GOSPEL OF



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## INTRODUCTION

The Gospel of Matthew presents Jesus as the One who came as Messiah and King. Written in the first century to a Jewish audience who yearned for such a Savior, it attempts to establish Jesus as a Jew descended from David who would reign forever. The gospel links together the Old and the New Testament showing Christ as the fulfillment of prophecy.

Jesus came not to abolish the law but to fulfill it. He taught that the most important call on one's life was to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind and to love your neighbor as yourself." In five great discourses woven throughout the gospel He helped His audience grasp what this means. For contemporary readers, obedience to these commands not only leads to the transforming love so desperately needed in our world, but to the fruits of peace and joy.

## LESSON ONE: MATTHEW 1:1-25

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Is there any special meaning or story associated with your name?*

Note: Matthew's genealogy shows Jesus to be a descendant of Abraham, the father of all Jews, and of David, from whom the Messiah would come. Matthew traces Jesus' family line to his legal father Joseph.

1. Why do you think Matthew would begin the story of Jesus with His genealogy?
2. What three titles were given to Jesus that would be important to Matthew's Jewish audience? v.1
3. Who was Abraham and why is it significant to connect Christ with him?  
(see Genesis 12:1-9)
4. Who was David and why is it significant to connect Christ with him?  
(2 Samuel 7:8-16)
5. What women were included in the genealogy? Why do you think Matthew included them when it was not the Jewish custom to do so?  
(optional: for additional information about these women see Genesis 38, Joshua 2:1-3, Ruth 1:15-22 and 2 Samuel 12:24)
6. What hope does the inclusion of these women in the family of Christ provide for you?
7. How did Matthew emphasize that Joseph was not the father of Jesus?

Matthew 1:16

Matthew 1:18-21

Matthew 1:25

8. How did Luke reinforce the truth of Jesus' supernatural birth?  
(see Luke 1:26-36)

9. What prophecy did Christ's birth fulfill? (see Isaiah 7:14)

Note: In Jesus' day engagements were binding relationships that could only be broken by divorce.

10. Describe Joseph as fully as you can.

11. Which of Joseph's qualities would you like to incorporate into your life?

12. What names were given to Jesus and what do they mean to you? vv. 21, 23

Memory Verse: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him  
Immanuel – which means "God with us." *Matthew 1:23*

Prayer Guide: Immanuel, God, You are with us.

## LESSON TWO: MATTHEW 2:1-23

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Share the memory of a special gift you received.*

Note: The Magi were gentile astrologers believed to be from Persia or the surrounding area who came seeking Jesus, King of the Jews.

Note: Herod was a gentile puppet king under the Romans who was given the title “King of the Jews.” He was ruthless, murdering a number of family members in addition to the babies in Bethlehem.

1. Why did the Magi make the long journey?
2. Drawing from this chapter only, and not from tradition, what do you know about the Magi?
3. What effects did the Magi’s inquiries have on Herod and why do you think he felt threatened by Jesus?
4. How did Jesus’ birth fulfill prophecy? v. 6 (see also John 10:11)
5. What was the first thing the Magi did when they reached Jesus?
6. What does it mean to worship? As you reflect on the following verses, which is the most personally challenging for you? Why?  
  
Psalm 100  
  
Romans 11:33-36  
  
Romans 12:1-2  
  
Most challenging verse:
7. What place does worship have in your life? What place would you like it to have?

Note: The gifts of the Magi held special significance. *Gold* was a gift for kings, *Frankincense* was used by priests and *Myrrh* represented Christ's sacrifice and death (it was used for embalming.)

8. Why do you think the Magi brought gifts?
9. Where in your life is there evidence of generosity as you give gifts to Jesus?  
(Think of the way you use your home, time, money and talents.)
10. What supernatural acts were involved in this chapter?  
  
Matthew 2:2, 9  
  
Matthew 2:12  
  
Matthew 2:13  
  
Matthew 2:19-20  
  
Matthew 2:22
11. How did this reveal God's protection of Jesus?
12. How did Joseph exhibit trust in this chapter?

Memory Verse: "...they saw the child with His mother Mary and they bowed down and worshiped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of gold and of frankincense and of myrrh." *Matthew 2:11*

Prayer Guide: King of Kings, we worship You.

### LESSON THREE: MATTHEW 3:1-4:11

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Have you ever traveled a distance to hear a noted speaker or musician?*

READ MATTHEW 3:1-16

1. Who was John and how did he fulfill Isaiah's prophecy?
2. Why do you think people traveled so far to hear him?
3. How were people to prepare for Jesus then and how are you to prepare today?

Matthew 3:2

Matthew 3:6

Matthew 3:8

Note: The *Pharisees* were legalistic and often hypocritical Jewish leaders who separated themselves from those who did not follow their practices. The *Sadducees* were a smaller, more worldly and politically minded Jewish group who denied such doctrines as the resurrection.

4. Why do you think John used such harsh images of judgment with the religious leaders?
5. Why was John hesitant to baptize Jesus?
6. If the only picture you had of Jesus were at His baptism, what would you know about Him? vv.15-17

READ MATHEW 4:1-11

7. Why did the Spirit lead Jesus into the desert? What significance do you see in this occurring just before His public ministry began?

8. What were Christ's temptations and what false understandings of God did they present?

Matthew 4:3-4

Matthew 4:5-7

Matthew 4:8-10

9. How did Jesus resist temptation?

10. How do you benefit from the experience of Jesus' temptation?

Hebrews 2:16-18

Hebrews 4:15-16

11. When are you most vulnerable to temptation and how can you protect yourself by following His example?

12. What happened after Jesus resisted temptation? v.11  
Have you experienced such mercy in your life?

Memory Verse: "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet He did not sin." *Hebrews 4:15*

Prayer Guide: Lord Jesus, deliver me from temptation.



## LESSON FOUR: MATTHEW 4:12-5:16

**OPENING QUESTION:** *What kind of people do you most like to work with?*

READ MATTHEW 4:12-25

Note: The “Kingdom of Heaven” has the same meaning as “Kingdom of God” used in Mark and Luke. It is believed that Matthew chose this phrase out of reverence and respect for Jews who did not pronounce God’s name. The expression means the rule and reign of God in hearts and lives.

1. How did Jesus fulfill Isaiah’s prophecy? vv. 15-16
2. What were Jesus’ activities in the beginning of His public ministry?

Matthew 4:17

Matthew 4:18-22

Matthew 4:23-25

3. What was the response to Jesus’ call and what personal challenge does that provide for you?

READ MATTHEW 5:1-16

Note: Chapters 5:1-7:29 are called the *Sermon on the Mount* and provide the first of five great discourses in Matthew. This compilation of teachings is the most complete summary of Jesus’ ethical expectations of His followers. C.S. Lewis called it “a sermon to disturb the comfortable and comfort the disturbed.”

4. What lessons can you learn about God’s blessing?

<u>Who is blessed?</u>	<u>What worldview clashes with this?</u>	<u>How can you receive this blessing?</u>
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a) Matthew 5:3 Isaiah 57:15		James 4:10
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*Example:*

*poor in spirit  
lowly/contrite*

*pride & hunger for power*

*humble yourself before God*

b) Matthew 5:4 Isaiah 61:1-2		James 4:7-9
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c) Matthew 5:5 Psalm 37:11		Matthew 11:27-30
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<u>Who is blessed?</u>	<u>What worldview clashes with this?</u>	<u>How can you receive this blessing?</u>
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|----|-------------------------------|------------------|
| d) | Matthew 5:6<br>Isaiah 42:1-4  | Isaiah 55:1-3    |
| e) | Matthew 5:7<br>Psalm 41:1     | Ephesians 5:1-2  |
| f) | Matthew 5:8<br>Psalm 24:3-4   | 1 John 3:1-3     |
| g) | Matthew 5:9<br>James 3:18     | Hebrews 12:14-15 |
| h) | Matthew 5:10<br>Isaiah 51:7-8 | Hebrews 12:2-3   |

5. Which of the rewards given to the blessed are you most yearning for and why?

6. What is the importance of these?

Salt:

Light:

7. In what current situation might God use you as salt and light?

Memory Verse: "Let your light shine before others, that they might see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." *Matthew 5:16*

Prayer Guide: Lord of Lords, reign in me.

## LESSON FIVE: MATTHEW 5:17-6:4

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Do you remember a rule from your childhood that was almost impossible to keep?*

Note: These very difficult teachings remind us that God's standards are so high that a person's righteousness can only come through faith in Him. The Pharisees observed the laws outlined here, as well as others, with mere legal compliance. Jesus is calling His listeners to obedience that grows out of love for God.

1. What makes you want to obey a law?

Note: There were three categories of law in the Old Testament: *ceremonial*, *civil* and *moral*. The primary purpose of ceremonial law was to point to Jesus Christ. This law was no longer necessary after His death and resurrection. While the principles behind civil law are timeless, this law cannot be followed specifically because of cultural differences. The moral law, such as the *Ten Commandments*, was obeyed by Jesus and remains valid. It demands obedience.

2. How did Jesus fulfill the law? Why do you think He stressed that He did not come to abolish it?

Hebrews 10:15-17

Romans 8:1-8

### 3. Six spiritual challenges:

ONE: Read Matthew 5:21-22, 1 John 3:15

God calls you from: (Example: *murder*)

He calls you to: (*control anger*)

Your personal challenge:

TWO: Read Matthew 5:23-26, Matthew 18:21-22

God calls you from:

He calls you to:

Your personal challenge:

THREE: Read Matthew 5:27-30, Exodus 20:14, 1 Corinthians 6:18

God calls you from:

He calls you to:

Your personal challenge:

FOUR: Read Matthew 5:31-32, Matthew 19:1-12

God calls you from:

He calls you to:

Your personal challenge:

FIVE: Read Matthew 5:33-37, Deuteronomy 23:23

God calls you from:

He calls you to:

Your personal challenge:

SIX: Read Matthew 5:38-47, 1 Peter 3:8-9

God calls you from:

He calls you to:

Your personal challenge:

READ MATTHE 6:1-4

4. What motivates you to give?
5. List the principles of giving found here.
6. What new understanding do you have of Jesus as you reflect back over the entire lesson?

Memory Verse: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." *Matthew 5:17*

Prayer Guide: Heavenly Father, strengthen me to obey.

## LESSON SIX: MATTHEW 6:5-18

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Share the memory of an unusual place where you prayed the Lord's Prayer.*

Note: Fasting in the Bible means going without food. In the New Testament it is associated with mourning and with praying to discern the will of God.

1. If you were to create a “prayer manual” with clear instructions about prayer and fasting for someone unfamiliar with these practices, what would it say?

Matthew 6:5-6

Matthew 6:7

Matthew 6:14-15

Matthew 6:16-17

Matthew 7:7-11

Note: To “hallow” means to honor God’s name which represents His character and power.

2. What hope do you find in praying to your “heavenly Father”? v.9  
(see also Psalm 103: 13-17)
3. What do you think is the significance of the *plural* form of the pronouns in the prayer? What can this mean to you as you pray alone? And what can it mean as you pray with others? vv.9-13
4. What is the difference between God’s will and the human will? v.10  
(see also Matthew 26:36-39, Isaiah 55:8-9)

5. What is God's will?  
How do you conform to it so you build His kingdom? v. 10  
  
Romans 12:1-2  
  
1 John 2:3-6
6. Why are you to pray "this day" for "daily" bread? v. 11
7. What is daily bread?  
(see also Exodus 16:4, Psalm 104:14-15, 27-28, John 6:35)
8. How can abundance prevent you from praying for "daily bread"?  
Describe your own experience with this.  
  
Deuteronomy 8:10-18  
  
Proverbs 30:8-9
9. With what attitude are you to seek forgiveness? v.12 (Psalm 139:23-24).  
Spend some moments asking the Lord to cleanse and restore you.
10. To whom do you need to extend forgiveness? (see also Matthew 18:21-35)
11. What counsel did Christ give His friends on the night of their great temptation?  
(see Matthew 26:41) In which area of temptation do you most need to follow His counsel?
12. What specific changes is God prompting you to make in your prayer life?

Memory Verse: "For if you forgive others when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." *Matthew 6:14*

Prayer Guide: Heavenly Father, help me to forgive others as you have forgiven me.

## LESSON SEVEN: MATTHEW 6:19-7:29

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Share a time when your great planning either produced disaster or success.*

READ MATTHEW 6:19-34

1. Why does it matter how you use your money? Is your heart in the place where God wants it to be?
2. What impact does worry have on your life?
3. Why does God command His children not to worry?  
Matthew 6:25  
Matthew 6:26  
Matthew 6:27  
Matthew 6:28-30  
Matthew 6:31-32  
Matthew 6:33  
Matthew 6:34
4. What is to replace worry?  
Matthew 6:33  
  
Philippians 4:6-7
5. What is the difference between planning for tomorrow and worrying about it?  
(see also Proverbs 3:1-10, 2 Corinthians 12:14, 1 Timothy 5:8,)
6. How can you practice what Jesus teaches with the issues that are worrying you today?

READ MATTHEW 7:1-29

Note: Dogs and pigs represented unclean and repugnant creatures. Dogs were not household pets but despised scavengers in New Testament times.

7. Why is judgment so dangerous?
8. What is the difference between judging others and being properly discerning?  
Matthew 7:1-6 (see also Matthew 10:16b)
9. Are there relationships in your own life where you are a “speck inspector”?  
What change would Christ make?
10. What sums up the law and the prophets?  
  
Matthew 7:12  
  
Romans 13:8-10
11. In what specific situation do you need to live this out?
12. What choices lead people into God’s presence? Why are these choices often so difficult to make?  
  
Matthew 7:13-14  
  
Matthew 7:21  
  
Matthew 7:24
13. What have you put into practice this week as a result of listening to God’s Word?

Memory Verse: “Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.” *Matthew 7:24*

Prayer Guide: Lord Jesus, help me to put Your words into practice.



## LESSON EIGHT: MATTHEW 8:1-9:34 (Part I)

**OPENING QUESTION:** *What have you learned about life through times of your own sickness or that of another?*

Note: Chapters 1-4 in the Gospel of Matthew introduce the *person of the King*. Chapters 5-7 teach the *principles of the King*. In chapters 8 and 9 the *power and authority of the King* are revealed. Many of the accounts of healing are found here. It is those we will focus on this week.

1. How did the people view Jesus as He left the mountain where He taught them?  
(see Matthew 7:28-8:1)

2. Why did Jesus perform miracles?

Luke 4:16-21

Matthew 9:35-36

Isaiah 53:4 & Matthew 8:17

John 20:30-31

3. READ slowly through chapters 8 and 9 paying special attention to all the accounts of healing. What most impresses you about Jesus as healer?

Note: Many Jewish people considered lepers, Gentiles and women outcasts. Pharisees would often pray: "I give thanks that I am a man and not a woman, a Jew and not a Gentile, a free-man and not a slave."

READ MATTHEW 8:1-4

4. With what words and actions did the leper reveal his faith? How did the Lord respond to him?

READ MATTHEW 8:5-17

Note: Centurions were Roman military officers in charge of soldiers.

5. Describe the centurion and his need as fully as you can.

6. What did the centurion receive from Jesus?
7. What aspects of the centurion's life would you like to make a part of your life?
8. What did Peter's mother-in-law do following her healing that stands as an example for you?

READ MATTHEW 8:28-34

Note: Mark and Luke include this incident in their gospels with greater detail singling out one demoniac.

9. What must life have been like for the two demon-possessed men before and after they were healed? (see also Mark 5:1-20, Luke 8:26-39)
10. What problem did the healing pose for the neighborhood and what did they miss?

READ MATTHEW 9:1-7

11. Who brought the paralytic to Jesus?
12. Why do you think Jesus addressed sin when the man had been brought for healing? Has your need for physical healing ever opened you to receive other types of healing as well?
13. Who might you bring to Jesus for help in their need? (see also James 5:13-16 and Mark 6:54-56)

READ MATTHEW 9:18-33

14. What role did touch have in each of these healings?

Bleeding woman:

Ruler's daughter:

Blind men:

15. Have you experienced Christ's touch in a way that has restored you? Explain.

Memory Verse: "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His Name." *John 20:31*

Prayer Guide: Gracious Savior, heal me.

## LESSON NINE: MATTHEW 8:1-9:34 (Part II)

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Have you ever risked greatly by following someone into a dangerous situation?*

1. How did Jesus reveal His authority in ways that would compel people to follow Him?
2. Has Christ compelled you to follow Him? Explain.

READ MATTHEW 8:18-22

3. What does it cost to follow Jesus?

Matthew 4:19-22 and 9:9

Matthew 8:21-22

Matthew 16:24

Matthew 19:27

4. What are the rewards? (see also John 5:24-27, Matthew 25:21)
5. What do these costs and rewards mean for you today if you choose to follow Jesus?

READ MATTHEW 8:23-27

6. What lessons about following did Jesus teach His disciples in the boat?
7. What were Christ's words to His followers in 8:26? In what situation do you need to listen to these words today?

READ MATTHEW 9:9-12

8. Describe Matthew.
9. What did Matthew do for his friends after he began following Jesus?  
(see Luke 5:29) How can you follow his example?
10. Who did Jesus come to help? What does this mean for you?
11. In what areas do you need to “go and learn” about mercy?

READ MATTHEW 9:14-17

12. What was Jesus really saying about Himself in His talk of wineskins?
13. Where in your life do you need to allow God to make things new?

READ MATTHEW 9:35-38

14. What motivated Christ’s work?
15. What motivates your work? Are there changes you would like to make?

Memory Verse: “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” *Matthew 9:13b*

Prayer Guide: Lord Jesus, help me follow You

## LESSON TEN: MATTHEW 10:1-11:19

**OPENING QUESTION:** *What kind of a person would you hire if you really wanted to get something done?*

Note: Christ's second discourse is contained in chapter 10.

Note: From a large group of followers called "disciples", Jesus selected twelve "apostles" who were sent forth to continue His mission.

1. What kind of people did Jesus choose as apostles?  
(see also 1 Corinthians 1:26-29)
  
2. Where did Jesus tell them to go and why? (see also Romans 1:16)
  
3. What work were they given authority to do? v. 1, vv.7-8
  
4. Why were they to pack lightly for their travel?

In what ways might Christ be nudging you to unburden yourself in order to serve Him more effectively?

5. What difficulties would the disciples experience?
  
6. How were the disciples to handle such difficulties?
  
7. Why do you think Jesus, who came as Prince of Peace, spoke of bringing division and tension? Have you seen this to be true in your own circle of friends and family?

8. What promises did Jesus send with His apostles? Which of these brings most comfort to you today and why?
9. What rewards were promised to those who extended hospitality to the apostles? How does this challenge you?

Matthew 10:11-14

Matthew 10:40-42

READ MATTHEW 11:1-19

10. How might John's imprisonment have led him to question Jesus as he did?
11. What was Christ's proof that He was the Messiah? vv.4-6 (see also Isaiah 35:5-6)  
  
What was His exhortation?
12. How did Jesus commend John in His description of Him?
13. What do you do when you, like John, fail to see the work of God and are filled with doubt? What help do these verses provide in such times?

Psalms 130:1-8

Mark 9:24

Memory Verse: "...whoever loses their life for My sake will find it." *Matthew 10:39b*

Prayer Guide: Jesus, help me surrender.

## LESSON ELEVEN: MATTHEW 11:20-12:50

**OPENING QUESTION:** *What recent experience has refreshed you?*

Note: Tyre, Sidon and Sodom were ancient cities that had been destroyed by God for their wickedness.

1. Why did Jesus denounce the cities? What warning is in there for you?
2. How does Jesus provide for those who humbly come to Him? (vv. 25-30)  
Have you found this to be true in your own experience?
3. How do you personally come to Jesus to receive the rest He promises?
4. What were the Pharisees' charges against Jesus and what do you think was in their hearts causing these attacks?

Matthew 12:1-2

Matthew 12:9-10

Matthew 12:24

5. What did Jesus teach about each of the following as He responded to His adversaries?

Scripture (Matthew 12:3-5)

Sabbath (Matthew 12:8, 11-12)

Pharisees (Matthew 12:7, 33-37)

Himself (Matthew 12:6, 28, 40-42)

6. How can you keep the Sabbath as God intended?

Isaiah 30:15

Isaiah 58:13-14

7. What was the Pharisees' purpose? (Matthew 12:14)

8. What was Christ's purpose? (Matthew 12:17-21, see also Isaiah 42:1-5)

9. Read Matthew 12:30. What does it mean to you personally?

10. How did the Pharisees want Jesus to prove His identity? Why do you think Jesus responded so harshly to them? (Matthew 12:38)

11. What sign was Jesus going to give? (Matthew 12:39-41)

12. What was Christ's response to His mother and brothers? How can His response be a comfort to you?

Memory Verse: "Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."  
*Matthew 11:28*

Prayer Guide: Prince of Peace, still my restless heart.



## LESSON TWELVE: MATTHEW 13:1-58

**OPENING QUESTION:** *What do you value in a story?*

Note: Chapter 13 is Christ's third discourse.

Note: A parable was an earthly story, told to illustrate a spiritual truth.

1. Read slowly through the entire chapter. What are your initial impressions of the "Kingdom of Heaven", which is Christ's focus in His teaching here?

2. Why did Jesus teach in parables?

Matthew 13:10-17

Matthew 13:34-35, Psalm 78:2

3. What was the impact of the parables on believers? What was it on unbelievers?

READ MATTHEW 13:1-8, 18-23 and LUKE 8:4-15

4. What does the seed in the parable represent? (see Luke 8:11)
5. According to this parable, what are the enemies of spiritual growth and fruitful life? (see also Colossians 3:5-10, 1 Timothy 6:6-10,)

Which of these present the greatest danger for you?

6. What are the benefits that come to those with "good soil" conditions?

7. What will promote strong roots to grow in the soil of your life?

Jeremiah 17:7-8

John 15:5

Ephesians 3:17-21

8. What will help you stand firm in the face of opposition?

Ephesians 6:10-18

READ MATTHEW 13:24-30, 36-43 and 47-50

9. What word pictures did Jesus use in these parables to teach the truth about belonging to Him?

10. Explain the meaning of each of the following:

field: vv. 24, 38

good seed: vv. 24, 38

weeds: v. 38

sower of good seed: v. 37

sower of evil seed: v. 39

11. What important lesson do these parables present?  
(see also 1 Corinthians 4:5)

12. What did Christ teach about growth and influence of the Kingdom of Heaven through the parable of the mustard seed and the yeast?

13. Why did the people in Jesus' hometown reject Him? vv.54-58

Are there times when you reject spiritual truth for similar reasons and miss what God may have for you?

Memory Verse: "Blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear."  
*Matthew 13:16*

Prayer Guide: Jesus, help me see and hear You.

## LESSON THIRTEEN: MATTHEW 14:1-36

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Has there ever been a time someone shared their food when you were hungry and had none?*

READ MATTHEW 14:1-12 and MARK 6:14-29

Note: Herod the Tetrarch, also known as Herod Antipas, was the son of Herod the Great who had ordered the murder of the Bethlehem infants. After the death of his father he became ruler of Galilee and Transjordan.

1. What do you think led Herod to reach his conclusion about Jesus?
2. What had Jesus concluded about Herod? (see Luke 13:32, Luke 23:8-9)
3. What did John's imprisonment reveal about him?
4. Read 1 John 2:15-16. How did Herod's actions compare to these sins?
5. How did the opinions of others shape Herod's actions? In what way do the opinions of others shape your actions, especially your responses to God?

READ MATTHEW 14:13-21 and MATTHEW 15:29-39

6. Describe what Jesus might have been feeling as He withdrew. How were His own needs put aside for the crowds that greeted Him? vv. 12-14
7. What was the attitude of Jesus toward the people in need? (Matthew 14:14, 15:30-32)
8. What was the attitude of the disciples toward people in need?

9. What faith lessons did the disciples learn and which of these are you most in need of remembering today?
10. What can you give to Jesus in order for it to be multiplied and used to meet the needs of others?
11. Imagine the crowds dispersing to their homes. What were they talking about?  
(see also John 6:14-15)

READ MATTHEW 14:22-34

Note: The fourth watch was between 3-6 AM

12. After a long day of meeting needs, where did Jesus go and why?
13. What can you learn from His example?
14. What were Christ's words to His disciples? In what situation of your life do you need to take these words to heart?

Matthew 14:27

Matthew 14:29

Matthew 14:31

15. What do you learn from Peter about belief and unbelief?

Memory Verse: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." *Matthew 14:27*

Prayer Guide: Gracious God, lead me from fear to faith.

## LESSON FOURTEEN: MATTHEW 15:1-28 and 16:1-12

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Did you grow up with any traditions that you still hold onto?*

READ MATTHEW 15:1-20

Note: The tradition of the elders was the oral tradition handed down by the great rabbis who attempted to regulate the daily lives of people with meticulous rules. It was not scripture.

1. What tradition was Jesus accused of breaking? (see also Leviticus 22:3-9)

Note: The expression “gift devoted to God” reflects the Hebrew term “Corban”. This formal vow made to God could be used to exempt one from other responsibilities. In this case, the vow to support the temple exempted one from the support of parents.

2. What were the Pharisees guilty of and what did this mean?  
(see also Mark 7:9-13)
3. What keeps people from falling into this trap? v.8  
(see also Isaiah 48:17-19)
4. What makes a person unclean? v.10
5. If you were to profile the failures of the religious leaders according to Jesus, what would they be?

Matthew 15:3-9

Matthew 15:13-14

Matthew 16:2-4

Matthew 16:6, 11-12

READ MATTHEW 15:21-28

6. Why do you think Jesus took His disciples outside the boundaries of Israel at this time?  
(see also Matthew 15:12 and Mark 7:24)

Note: The Canaanite woman was a Gentile Greek from a group considered to be an enemy of the Jews.

7. Describe the Canaanite woman. What example does she provide for your faith?
8. Why do you think Jesus at first refused to help her?
9. What did the woman receive from Jesus?

READ MATTHEW 16:1-12

10. What had the Pharisees seen Jesus do? What were they requesting now and what do you think they really wanted?
11. Why did Jesus refuse them?
12. Read Galatians 5:7-10 together with Matthew 16:11-12.  
What power does the *yeast of false teaching* have and how can you avoid it?  
(see Psalm 119:1-2, 9-11)

Memory Verse: "The things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make you unclean." *Matthew 15:18*

Prayer Guide: Savior, create in me a pure heart.

## LESSON FIFTEEN: MATTHEW 16:13-17:13

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Has there been a place you've visited that you enjoyed so much you didn't want to return home?*

READ MATTHEW 16:13-20

Note: Peter's confession of Christ was made in Caesarea Philippi, a center for pagan worship.

1. Who did the *people* say Jesus was?
2. Who did *Peter* say Jesus was and who was behind his confession? v. 17
3. Who do *you* say Jesus is and who is behind your confession?

1 Corinthians 2:10-16

1 Corinthians 12:3

4. How was Peter blessed?
5. What was Christ's intent for His church? How does this help you to value it more?

Matthew 16:18

Ephesians 2:19-21

1 Peter 2:9-10

READ MATTHEW 16:21-28

6. What was Jesus' emphasis from this point on and how did this fulfill scripture? (see also Isaiah 53)
7. Why did Peter resist Christ's predictions? v. 23 (see also Matthew 4:8-10, 1 Corinthians 1:18)

8. Are there situations in your life right now where you are resisting Christ's purposes?
9. How can you gain true life? vv. 24-27

READ MATTHEW 17:1-13

Note: The Greek word translated "transfigured" is metamorphothe, from which we get our word metamorphosis. The verb refers to an outward change that comes from within.

10. Why did Jesus go up the mountain and whom did He take along?  
(see Luke 9:28)

11. What did the disciples learn about Jesus on the mountain?

Matthew 17:2, Revelation 1:12-13

Matthew 17:5, 3:17

Matthew 17:7, 14:27

Matthew 17:9, 12, Luke 9:30-31

12. How were the disciples told to respond to Jesus? v. 5b  
How does this happen in your life?

13. What role was Elijah to have and how had John the Baptist fulfilled this role? (vv.10-13)

Malachi 4:5-6

John 1:6-9, 15-17

14. Read 2 Peter 1:16-18. How would this encounter have strengthened their faith for the difficult days that lay ahead? How does it strengthen yours?

Memory Verse: "What good will it be for you to gain the whole world, yet forfeit your soul."  
*Matthew 16:26*

Prayer Guide: Father, guard my heart and life in Christ Jesus.



## LESSON SIXTEEN: MATTHEW 17:14-18:35

**OPENING QUESTION:** *What have you learned from a child recently?*

READ MATTHEW 17:14-27

1. What faced Jesus when He came down from the mountain?  
(see also Luke 9:37-40)
2. Why were the disciples unable to heal?
3. What filled the disciples with grief?

Note: A two-drachma tax was required each year of every Jewish male to be used for the upkeep of the temple.

4. Why would Jesus not have needed to pay the temple tax? (Matthew 12:6)
5. Why did Jesus pay the tax? (see also 1 Corinthians 8:9)

READ MATTHEW 18:1-14 and 19:13-15

Note: Chapter 18 begins the fourth of Matthew's discourses, which deals primarily with relationships within the Christian community.

6. Why do you think the disciples asked about *greatness* in the Kingdom at this time?
7. What had Jesus already taught His disciples about greatness?  
(see Matthew 5:19, 11:11)
8. How is your faith to resemble a child's and why do you think this is imperative?  
Why is it difficult?

9. What allows children to come to Jesus? What is your role in this?
10. What warning is given to those who would cause children or vulnerable ones to sin?  
(see also Luke 17:1-3)
11. What encouragement do you find in the parable of the Lost Sheep?

READ MATTHEW 18:15-35

12. What is your initial response to someone who sins against you?
13. What guidelines does Jesus provide for dealing with sin?  
vv. 15-22 (see also Galatians 6:1-2)
14. What point about forgiveness is driven home by the unmerciful servant?
15. In what relationship do you need to forgive because Christ has forgiven you?  
(see also Matthew 6:12)

Memory Verse: "Those who humble themselves like this child are the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." *Matthew 18:4*

Prayer Guide: Father, help me trust You like a child.

## LESSON SEVENTEEN: MATTHEW 19:1-30

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Did you ever willingly give away something you really wanted to keep?*

READ MATTHEW 19:1-12

Note: John the Baptist had been imprisoned for confronting Herod Antipas about taking his brother's wife. Christ's words on divorce could have brought Him in direct conflict with Herod.

1. What did the Pharisees ask Jesus about divorce and why?

2. What is God's ideal design for marriage?  
vv. 4-6 (see also Genesis 2:21-25)

Note: The Old Testament divorce laws were intended to protect women from being sent away for doing anything that displeased their husbands.

3. Why was divorce instituted? (see also Deuteronomy 24:1-4)

4. Under what condition was divorce permitted? v.9

5. What indicates that these teachings were as difficult for the disciples then as they are for people today?

6. What is God's attitude about divorce? (see Malachi 2:16)

7. How does God feel about divorced people? (see Psalm 103)

8. How can you encourage and protect marriage, regardless of your marital status?

READ MATTHEW 19:16-30

9. Write a complete personality profile of the young man and reflect on why he came to Jesus.

10. Why do you think Jesus told the young man to sell his possessions?

11. What does this encounter teach about  
Wealth?

Access to eternal life? (see also Romans 3:21-24, Ephesians 2:8-9)

12. How can you know that you have eternal life?

John 3:15-18

John 5:24

John 10:27-28

13. What is there in the way you view or use your money that may prevent you from following Jesus?

14. What rewards did Jesus promise His disciples who left everything to follow Him?

Memory Verse: Jesus said to His disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven." *Matthew 19:23*

Prayer Guide: Lord, let Your kingdom come and Your will be done.

## LESSON EIGHTEEN: MATTHEW 20:1-34

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Did you ever receive a reward for your work that far exceeded your expectation?*

READ MATTHEW 20:1-19

Note: A denarius was the day's wage for a laborer.

1. What did the landowner promise his workers?
2. Why did those hired first grumble and how did the landowner respond?
3. Are there situations in your own life and ministry where you are like those grumblers?
4. What does the parable teach about  
God's sovereignty?  
  
God's grace? (see also Luke 23:40-43)
5. Jesus again predicted His death. What additional details did He present to His disciples?  
(review Matthew 16:21, 17:23)

Note: "Drink the cup" was an expression that often pointed to suffering.

6. What was the mother's request of Jesus and why do you think she made it?
7. What do you think the impact of this request was on  
Jesus?  
  
her sons?  
  
the other disciples?

8. Who is the “great” person according to Jesus?
9. What are you building into your life to allow you and your children to become truly “great” people?
10. What role does suffering have in the life of the person who would be truly great in God’s eyes? vv. 22-23
11. How did James and John later share in this suffering?  
(see Acts 12:1-2 and Revelation 1:9)
12. What do those who suffer with Christ receive? (1 Peter 5:10-11)

READ MATTHEW 20:29-34

Note: While this incident is included in both Mark’s and Luke’s gospels, Matthew’s account includes two men rather than one.

13. What lessons do the blind men provide about seeking help to meet a need?
14. What steps did Jesus take to meet their need?
15. What do you want Jesus to do for you? Take your need to Him. (see also Hebrews 4:16)

Memory Verse: The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give His life as a ransom for many.” *Matthew 20:28*

Prayer Guide: Lord Jesus, grant me a willing spirit to serve.

## LESSON NINETEEN: MATTHEW 21:1-46

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Have you ever assisted someone with preparations for an important event?*

READ MATTHEW 21:1-17

Note: Traditionally, the events of the Lord's last week are as follows:

Sunday	Triumphal entry into Jerusalem
Monday	Cleansing of temple and cursing of fig tree
Tuesday	Debate with Jewish leaders and Olivet Discourse
Wednesday	Rest
Thursday	Last Supper and arrest at the Garden of Gethsemane
Friday	Crucifixion and burial
Saturday	Death in the tomb
Sunday	Resurrection

(Warren Wiersbe, *Bible Handbook*)

1. Who were the people present as Jesus entered Jerusalem and how did they respond to Him?

Matthew 21:6

Matthew 21:10

Matthew 21:11

Matthew 21:14

Matthew 21:15a

Matthew 21:15b

2. How was Christ's triumphal entrance a fulfillment of prophecy?

Psalms 118:25-27

Zechariah 9:9

3. Read John 11:38-48 and John 12:17-19. What fueled the people's enthusiasm for Jesus and the religious leaders' rejection?

Note: The buying and selling in the temple took place in the large outer court of the Gentiles.

4. What was God's intent for the temple?

Matthew 21:13

Isaiah 56:7

5. What did Jesus disrupt in the temple and why?  
(see also Jeremiah 7:11, John 2:17)
6. What would Jesus disrupt in your heart and life as you seek to worship Him? Why?

READ MATTHEW 21:18-46

7. How was the fig tree a picture of the nation's attitude toward God and His Messiah?  
(see also Hosea 9:10)

8. How did the religious leaders question Christ's authority? v. 23

9. What did the religious leaders forfeit because they refused to submit to Christ's authority?

Matthew 21:27

Matthew 21:31-32

Matthew 21:43

10. What will you forfeit if you refuse to submit to His authority? In what area could you respond to Him today?

11. In Christ's parable of the vineyard what do each of these represent?

Landowner:

Farmers:

Servants:

Son:

Other tenants:

12. What was the response of the religious leaders to Jesus' parables and why? vv.45-46

Memory Verse: "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone..." *Matthew 41:42a*

Prayer Guide: Lord, help me build my life on You.



## LESSON TWENTY: MATTHEW 22:1-46

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Where do you go to get difficult questions answered?*

READ MATTHEW 22:1-14

Note: Double invitations to weddings were common. People responded to an initial invitation with acceptance and were then notified when preparations were complete. Refusal to come to an event shamed the host.

1. Briefly summarize the main teaching of the parable.
2. What additional insights do you receive from these verses?

Isaiah 61:10

Zechariah 3:3-5

Revelation 3:4-6

Revelation 19:7-9

3. How does this parable offer both warning and hope?

READ MATTHEW 22:15-22

Note: While the Pharisees opposed Roman rule, the Herodians supported it.

4. What religious group came next to Jesus and why?
5. How did Jesus answer them and what was their response?
6. How do these passages further clarify the truth Jesus was teaching?

Romans 13:5-7

1 Peter 2:13-17

7. What group stepped in next and why did they think they had such a difficult question for Jesus? (see also Deuteronomy 25:5-6, Acts 23:8,)

8. What did Jesus teach about the resurrection and what hope does this provide?  
(see also 1 Corinthians 15:35-58)

READ MATTHEW 22:34-46

9. What new question was raised to test Jesus? (v. 36)

Note: One is to love God with all of one's being. The heart is the seat of emotions, the soul of the will, the mind of the intellect and the strength of the physical nature. (William MacDonald Bible Commentary)

10. What does it mean to you to love God with

all your heart?

all your soul?

all your strength? (see Deuteronomy 6:5, Mark 12:30,)

all your mind? (see also Romans 12:2, 2, Corinthians 10:5, Ephesians 4:23,)

11. How is this commandment impacting your daily choices?

12. What does it really mean to love your neighbor and to whom do you need to extend this kind of love?

1 John 3:14-24

Luke 10:25-37

13. Explain the relationship between these two commands. Why do you think Jesus gave them in the order He did?

14. What finally silenced the Pharisees? vv.42-45 (see also Acts 2:29-36)

Note: *Christ* was the Greek translation of the Hebrew word for *Messiah*.

Memory Verse: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." *Matthew 22:37*

Prayer Guide: Loving Savior, increase my love.

## LESSON TWENTY-ONE: MATTHEW 23-24

**OPENING QUESTION:** *How has a leader influenced you by their example?*

READ MATTHEW 23:1-36

Note: “Phylacteries” were small boxes containing passages from the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) that were attached to the forehead or left arm. The larger the box, the greater the piety professed by the wearer. (The Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ, NavPress)

1. How were the people to respond to the teachers of the law and why? vv.2-7
2. What principles of godly leadership does Jesus review and how did the religious leaders violate these with their actions? vv. 5-12

Note: *Rabbi* meant “my great one”, *Father* was applied mainly to great Rabbis of the past, and *Master* meant something more like professor. The danger in using such terms was becoming dependent on people instead of God Himself.

3. If you had been in the crowd this day what would you have told your family when you went home?
4. In the seven “woes” what distortions of values did Jesus emphasize?

Matthew 23:13-14

Matthew 23:15

Matthew 23:16-22

Matthew 23:23-24

Matthew 23:25-26

Matthew 23:27-28

Matthew 23:29-32

5. How do the lessons provided here help you live in a way that brings blessing rather than judgment?
6. What is *hypocrisy* and why is it so dangerous?

READ MATTHEW 23:37-39

7. How did Jesus see Jerusalem and what was His heart for the city?

8. What prophecy of condemnation and of hope did He pronounce?  
(see also Isaiah 62:1-4)

READ MATTHEW 24:1-51 and LUKE 21:5-38

9. What did Jesus predict would happen to the temple? v. 2  
(see also Luke 21:20-24)
10. What three questions did the disciples ask about this? v.3
11. What do we know about the day of Christ's return and what don't we know?
12. What general signs will precede Christ's return?
- Matthew 24:4-5, 11
- Matthew 24:6-7
- Matthew 24:9
- Matthew 24:10-12
- Matthew 24:14
13. What admonishment does Christ give the believers?
- Matthew 24:23 (see also 1 John 4:1-3)
- Matthew 24:42 (see Luke 21:34-36)
- Matthew 24:43-45
- Luke 21:9
- Luke 21:19
- Luke 21:28
14. What does the promise that Christ will return mean to you? v.30  
See also (Acts 1:9-11, Revelation 1:7)

Memory Verse: "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come." *Matthew 24:42*

Prayer Guide: Prepare my heart Lord Jesus.

## LESSON TWENTY-TWO: MATTHEW 24:45-26:35

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Have you ever been totally unprepared for a significant event?*

READ MATTHEW 24:45-25:46

1. What do these passages teach you about living in preparation for Christ's return?

Matthew 24:45-51

*Avoid this:*

*Do this:*

Matthew 25:1-13

*Avoid this:*

*Do this:*

Matthew 25:14-30

*Avoid this:*

*Do this:*

Matthew 25:31-46

*Avoid this:*

*Do this:*

2. Are there changes these passages challenge you to make in your life? Explain.
3. Describe the qualities of a servant who pleases God.
4. What pictures does Christ use to show the reality of judgment.  
(see also 13:24-30)
5. What enables you to live the life that pleases God?  
(see also James 2:14-26, John 8:12)

6. What additional insight do you gain about Christ as Judge? (see also John 5:27-30)
- King? (see also Luke 1:32-33)

READ MATTHEW 26:1-35

7. What was the plot of the religious leaders against Jesus?
8. What do each of the following reveal about their character through their relationship with Jesus? How does their example challenge you?

Mary

Judas

Peter

9. With what words did Jesus make it clear that He would be betrayed, denied and abandoned by His disciples? Why do you think He spoke of this?

Matthew 26:21

Matthew 26:23

Matthew 26:31

Matthew 26:34

10. What do you think leads a person to betray, deny or abandon Christ or others?

Memory Verse: "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things." *Matthew 25:21*

Prayer Guide: Lord Jesus, make me faithful in all things.

## LESSON TWENTY-THREE: MATTHEW 26:17-27:26

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Have you ever stood against a crowd for something you believed in?*

READ MATTHEW 26:17-35

Note: Passover commemorated the deliverance of the people of Israel from Egyptian bondage. It was a weeklong celebration that flooded Jerusalem with visitors.

1. How did Jesus at His death fulfill the symbolism of the Passover and become the Passover Lamb?

Exodus 12:5

Exodus 12:12-13

Exodus 12:8b, 1 Corinthians 5:7

John 1:29

2. What new meaning did Jesus give to the elements of the Passover meal?

*Bread:* (see also John 6:51)

*Cup:* (see also 1 Peter 1:18-19)

3. What insight from these passages can enrich your experience of communion in the future?

READ MATTHEW 26:36-56

4. Describe Christ's dark night of the soul in Gethsemane.  
(see also Luke 22:39-45)

5. What did Christ pray and what victory was won in the garden?

6. What do you learn from Him to help you to go through times of darkness and temptation?  
(see also Hebrews 2:14-18)

7. What did Christ reveal about Himself as He was betrayed and arrested?

Note: The mob took Jesus first to Caiaphas, the High Priest. This trial, a mockery of justice, ended at daybreak with their decision to kill Him; but the Jews needed Rome's permission for the death sentence. Jesus was taken to Pilate, then to Herod, and back to Pilate who sentenced Him to die. (Life Application Bible Studies)

READ MATTHEW 26:57-27:26

8. What mistreatment did Jesus receive at the hand of the religious leaders?
9. Why do you think Jesus remained silent during much of this time?  
(see also Isaiah 53:7, 1 Peter 2:21-24)
10. Read Daniel 7:13-14. What did Jesus finally say about Himself and why did the religious leaders find it so offensive?

Note: Blasphemy not only involved reviling the Name of God (Leviticus 24:10-16) but affronting His majesty or authority. Mosaic law prescribed death as a punishment for it. (NIV Study Bible)

11. How did Peter and Judas each respond to their failure and guilt?
12. What do you tend to do with your failure guilt? What does God want you to do?
- 1 John 1:8-9
- Psalm 32:1-5
- Psalm 51:1-11
13. Why did the religious leaders change their blasphemy charges against Jesus when they appeared before Pilate? vv.11-14 (see also Mark 14:61-64, Luke 23:1-5)
14. Why should Pilate have released Jesus?
15. What personal warnings do you find in Pilate's example?

Memory Verse: "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." *Matthew 26:41*

Prayer Guide: Kind Father, have mercy on me a sinner.



## LESSON TWENTY-FOUR: MATTHEW 27:27-28:20

**OPENING QUESTION:** *Share a time recently when you were surprised by joy.*

Note: Crucifixion was the Roman method of execution used only for slaves and foreigners. It was illegal to inflict it on Roman citizens. Scourging always preceded crucifixion and some victims died under it. (Barclay)

1. What do you think leads people to mock others? What is the impact on the target? What is the impact on the mockers?

2. Describe the mocking that accompanied Jesus to the cross.

Matthew 27:27-31

Matthew 27:39-40

Matthew 27:41-43

Matthew 27:44

3. Read 1 Corinthians 1:22-25. What did the mockers fail to understand about Christ?

4. Read Psalm 22:1-21. Describe Christ's agony.

5. What was the significance of the tearing of the temple curtain?  
(see also Hebrews 9:1-4, Hebrews 10:19-23)

Note: Romans preferred bodies of criminals to rot on crosses but Jewish custom forbade this. Joseph showed great courage in reclaiming the body. (Keener)

6. Who was Joseph? (see also Luke 23:50-54) How did he honor Jesus and, in doing so, fulfill prophecy? (see also Isaiah 53:9)

7. How did fear of Jesus continue to plague the religious leaders?

Matthew 27:62-66

Matthew 28:11-15

8. What role did the women play?

Matthew 27:55-56

Matthew 27:61

Matthew 28:1-10

9. Why is Christ's resurrection so important to faith?  
(see 1 Corinthians 15:14-19)

10. What are the implications of Christ's resurrection in your life?

Romans 5:10

Romans 8:11

Colossians 3:1-4

11. What job description did Jesus leave with His disciples?  
(see Matthew 28:19-20)

12. What makes it possible to do this? (see Matthew 28:20 and 1:23)  
How are you currently serving Him empowered by this assurance?

13. How has your love of Christ grown through this study of Matthew?

Memory Verse: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." *Matthew 28:19-20*

Prayer Guide: Risen Lord, lead me.

## REVIEW LESSON I

1. What verses have been especially meaningful to you?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What new insights have you received about Jesus as  
Healer:  
  
Friend of sinners:  
  
Miracle worker:  
  
Teacher:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Which of Christ's teachings have caused you to make changes in attitudes or actions?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Whose encounter with Jesus meant the most to you and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What has drawn you to love Christ more?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Is there anything from our study that helps you to prepare your heart for Christmas?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What praise do you offer?

## REVIEW LESSON II

1. What verses do you most want to remember from the study of Matthew?
2. How have you seen Christ's power in new ways through this study?
3. How has Christ challenged you in your own power and control issues?
4. Which of Christ's words have left the greatest mark on your heart?
5. What have you learned about prayer and what difference has that made in your life?
6. How have you seen God answer prayer?
7. What have you learned about suffering to sustain you through times of difficulty?
8. How have you deepened your experience of Christ as Immanuel, God with you through this study?
9. What will you rejoice in as you leave?