**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

[Welcome](#_swffmikypmlm) **2**

[Lesson 1 | The Prologue](#_vmhk71wfews) **5**

[Lesson 2 | The Birth of the King](#_n26znq6s6ux4) **15**

[Lesson 3 | Kingdom Preparation: In the Wilderness](#_m384viruudm8) **25**

[Lesson 4 | Kingdom Inauguration: In Galilee](#_hgoln2p8jtdy) **35**

[Lesson 5 | The Message of the Kingdom: The Sermon on the Mount Pt 1](#_g2iaejbmcr0c) **45**

[Lesson 6 | The Message of the Kingdom: The Sermon on the Mount Pt 2](#_654x5ylei8fw) **55**

[Lesson 7 | The Message of the Kingdom: The Sermon on the Mount Pt 3](#_59rjq7f4qq8r) **65**

[Lesson 8 | The Message of the Kingdom: The Sermon on the Mount Pt 4](#_f58k2ra0urf3) **75**

[Lesson 9 | The King Demonstrates His Authority](#_g8mab7kl06i7) **85**

[Lesson 10 | The King Delegates His Authority](#_hb3x2upx6i3y) **97**

[Lesson 11 | The King Warns and Invites](#_1sjeofeurdav) **107**

[Lesson 12 | Conflicts With the King](#_gp1r0yci9kul) **117**

[Appendix | Map & Prayer Requests Log](#_z0qkujsujm97) **129**

**Resources/Commentaries used for this study:**

* *Matthew (The IVP New Testament Commentary)* by Craig S. Keener
* *The Ivp Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* by Craig S. Keener
* *The New American Commentary: Matthew* by Craig L. Blomberg
* *The Gospel of Matthew (The New International Commentary on the New Testament)* by R. T. France
* *Matthew, Volumes 1-3 (International Critical Commentary Series)* by W. D. Davies, Dale C. Allison Jr.
* *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, Volume 8: Matthew, Mark, Luke* by D. A. Carson, Walter W. Wessel, Walter L. Liefeld

All Scripture passages are taken from the English Standard Version.

# Welcome

Hello!

We are so glad you decided to join us in the first of our three-part study of the “Gospel of Matthew: Kingdom Citizens.”

This semester we will be studying the first 12 chapters of the first book of the New Testament. From the Birth of Jesus to his ministry and teachings, we’ll see how Jesus is the promised King who Israel had been anticipating for centuries. We will learn that the King and His Kingdom aren’t what we expect them to be, yet His Kingdom is the only one worth seeking.

During each week of our study we will work through these steps:

**Step #1 - Personal Study/Homework**

Look at the text: Understand Their Story

* As you read through a passage of Matthew at home in preparation for our weekly meetings, you will answer a series of questions to help you understand what the author is trying to communicate in this section of the book, and what it meant to the original audience.

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

* You will also have the opportunity to see how the passage you are studying connects to God’s big story revealed throughout the whole Bible and ultimately pointing us to salvation in Jesus Christ.

**Step #2 - Small Group Discussion**

* You will discuss what you learned when you get together with your small group each week. Homework completion is not required, but it leads to fruitful and dynamic discussion.

**Step #3 - Large Group Teaching**

* One of our large group teachers will teach on the text, drawing out biblical themes and application points.

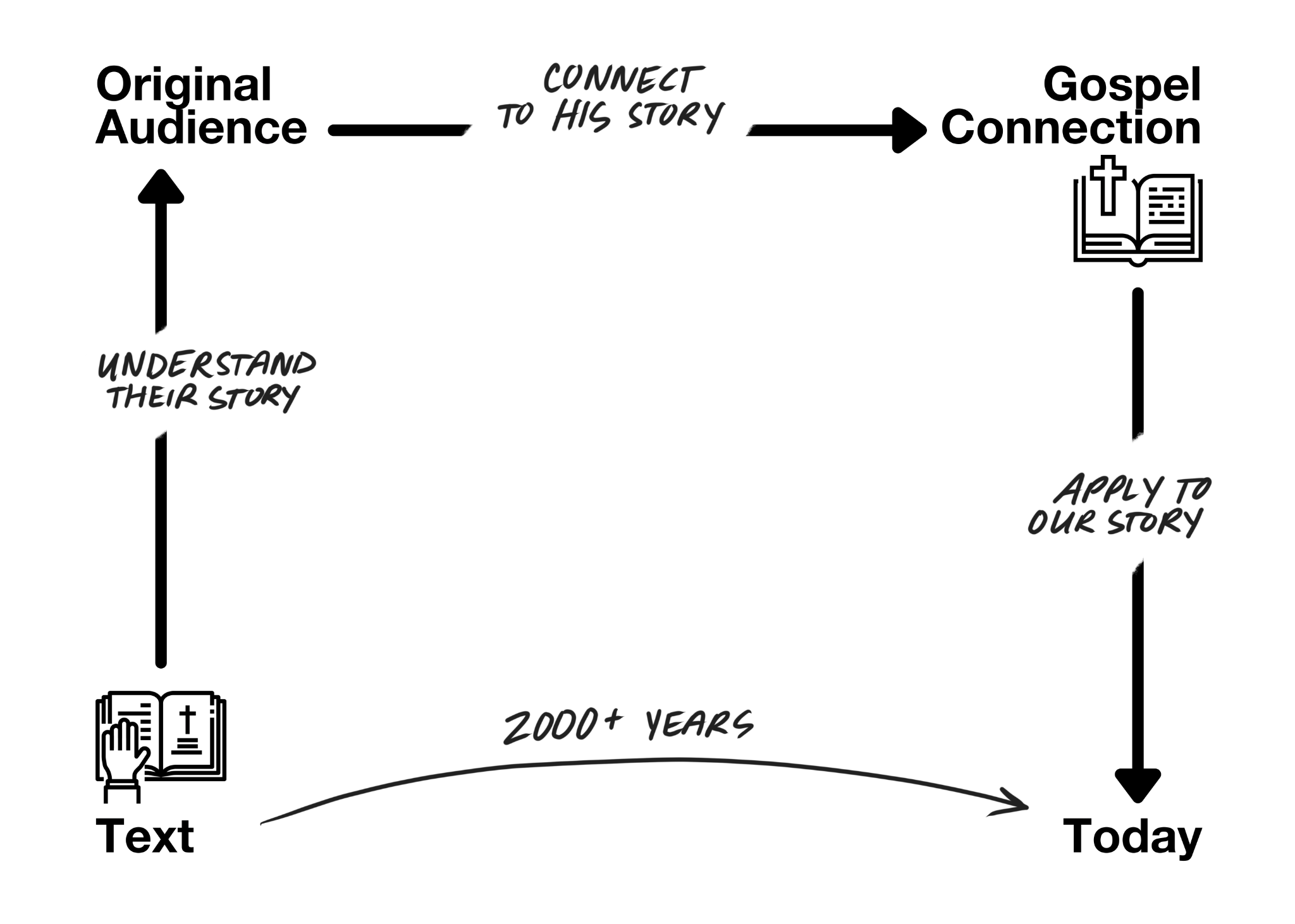
**Step #4 - Small Group Discussion**

Apply to Our Story

* After the time of teaching, you will have an opportunity to answer application questions in your groups. As we grow in our knowledge of God and His word, it should affect our attitudes and our actions. This discussion time will naturally lead into a time of prayer, since we need God’s help to live as His people.

We look forward to learning from God and from each other as we study Matthew together!

**How we are going to study the text each week:**



**How this workbook is set up:**

Each lesson will guide you through your personal study, beginning with a short introduction followed by three pages of observation questions, three pages of gospel connection questions, and finally a reflection page. The reflection page will allow you to think on how the passages you have studied prepare or point to Jesus, as well as a space for you to prayerfully apply what you have learned to your own heart.

# Lesson 1 | The Prologue

Matthew 1:1-17

***Large Group Teaching***

Since we are going to spend the next few months studying the book that Matthew wrote, we thought it would be a good idea to introduce you to the author himself. Who is Matthew? What do we know about him from the Bible?

1. What does the Bible tell us about Matthew?
   1. His life before he met Jesus: Matthew 9:9-13; Mark 2:13-17; Luke 5:27-32
   2. Who is his father?
   3. What other name is he known by?
   4. What was his occupation?
   5. What two things did he do when Jesus called him to follow?
2. His role during the time that Jesus was on earth: Matthew 10:1-4, Mark 3:13-19, Luke 6:12-16
   1. Which group was Matthew invited to join?
   2. What responsibility was given to this group of people?
3. His role after Jesus’ death and resurrection: Acts 1:12-14.
   1. What do you learn about Matthew in this text?

*What else do we know about Matthew?*

* Not much! He is not mentioned in the Bible apart from these references, and early Church historians did not record how or if he preached or traveled, how long he lived, and where or when he died. Despite the lack of information about Matthew, his gospel was recognized as Scripture and quoted by church leaders within the first 100 years after Jesus’ resurrection.[[1]](#footnote-0)

2. What do we need to know about Mattthew’s gospel before we start?

* How it is organized.
  + Matthew 1:1 to 2:23 Prologue: Arrival of Jesus the Messiah
  + Matthew 3:1 to 25:46 Ministry of Jesus the Messiah
  + Matthew 26:1 to 28:20 Epilogue: Death and Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah

It is interesting to note that Jesus’ ministry features 5 extended speeches which end with the same words…

* + - Speech #1 - The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1 - 7:27)
      * 7:28, “*when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished…”*
    - Speech #2 - The Sermon on his Mission (Matthew 10:1 - 10:42)
      * 11:1 - “*When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples…”*
    - Speech #3 - Parables on the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 13:1 - 52)
      * 13:53: “*And when Jesus had finished these parables…”*
    - Speech #4 - Teaching on Discipleship (Matthew 18:1 - 18:35)
      * 19:1: “*Now when Jesus had finished these sayings…”*
    - Speech #5 - The Farewell Address (Matthew 23:1-25:46)
      * 26:1: “*When Jesus finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples.*.”
* The Purpose of the Gospel.
  + Matthew doesn’t tell us why he wrote this book, but a common theme appears to be “Fulfillment”.[[2]](#footnote-1) Commentators agree that Matthew is likely writing to Jewish Christians, in order to affirm and strengthen their understanding that Jesus is the Messiah promised to the nation of Israel through the Old Testament.[[3]](#footnote-2)
    - Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies (Matthew 1:22-23, 2:5-6, 15, 17-28, 23, 8:17, 12:17-21, 13:14-15, 13:35, 21:4-5, 26:54-56, 27:9)
    - Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament law (Matthew 5:17-18)
    - Jesus fulfilled the role of the Old Testament prophets, priests and kings (Matthew 12:1-8, 39-42)
    - Jesus fulfilled the Old Covenant (Matthew 26:26-28)

Ready to get started? We’ll begin by reading and recording what we learn from the Genealogy: Matthew 1:1-17

**Matthew 1:1-17 (ESV)***LESSON ONE*

1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, 3 and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, 4 and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, 5 and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, 6 and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, 7 and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, 8 and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, 9 and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, 10 and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, 11 and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

12 And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, 13 and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, 14 and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, 15 and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, 16 and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

17 So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

***Look at the text: Understand Their Story***

1. The STRUCTURE of Jesus’ genealogy
   1. **WHAT** three names are mentioned in Matthew 1:1? List them in the order they appear in the text.
   2. Matthew moves from this introductory verse to Jesus’ genealogy, and divides His genealogy into three distinct time periods of Israel’s history. **WHAT** people or events begin and end each time period?
      1. Matthew 1:2-6a Begins with: Ends with:
      2. Matthew 1:6b - 11 Begins with: Ends with:
      3. Matthew 1:12-16 Begins with: Ends with:
   3. **HOW** does the order of names listed in the genealogy relate to the first verse of Matthew (Matthew 1:1)?
   4. **WHAT** does Matthew bring to the reader’s attention about the genealogy as he summarizes it in verse 17?

## 

## 

## 

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story (Part 1)***

1. The PEOPLE of Jesus’ Genealogy
   1. Jesus Christ. Jesus’ first name was Jesus, but “Christ” is a title. “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word “Messiah” or “Anointed One” which was used throughout the Old Testament. What seems to be the role of the “Messiah” or “Anointed one” in the following verses?
   2. 1 Samuel 2:10
   3. Psalm 2:2

* 1. Who is described as “the anointed” in 2 Samuel 23:1?

* + 1. By adding the title “Christ” to Jesus’ name in this genealogy, what is Matthew saying about Jesus?

1. *David* ***-*** As mentioned in 2 Samuel 23:1, David was an anointed king of Israel, and one of Jesus’ ancestors. Why is he significant? Read 2 Samuel 7:8-13 (scripture on the next page). In this text, God is making several promises to David. What is the final promise?
   1. Read 2 Samuel 7:16-17. What promise does God repeat here?
2. With this promise in mind, what is Matthew saying about Jesus by drawing attention to the fact that he is the “Son of David”?

c.*Abraham -* Abraham is the first person mentioned in Jesus’ genealogy. He was an idol worshiper whom God invited to follow him. Why is he significant?

i. Read Genesis 12:1-3. In this text, God is making several promises to Abram.   
What is the final promise?

1. With this promise in mind, what is Matthew saying about Jesus by drawing attention to the fact that He is the “Son of Abraham”?

Write Matthew 1:1 in your own words based on what you’ve learned about what each title or person represents.

The book of the genealogy of Jesus \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(meaning for word “Christ”)

the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

(significance of being the son of David)

the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

(significance of being the son of Abraham)

d. Most genealogies include only men, but Matthew includes four women in Jesus’ genealogy. What can we learn about each of them? Read these verses and summarize their story.

i. *Tamar*  (v 3) - Genesis 38:6-30*(summary from the Harper’s Bible Dictionary)*

ii. *Rahab* (v 5) - Joshua 6:22-25

iii. *Ruth* (v 5) - Ruth 1:1-4, 16-18

iv.*The wife of Uriah* (v 6) - 2 Samuel 11:1-5

1. What do these women have in common?
2. Why do you think Matthew included them in Jesus’ genealogy?

***Scripture for Gospel Connections***

Question 1.a

**1 Samuel 2:10**

The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces;

against them he will thunder in heaven.

The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;

he will give strength to his king

and exalt the horn of his anointed.”

**Psalm 2:2**

The kings of the earth set themselves,

and the rulers take counsel together,

against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying,

**2 Samuel 23:1**

Now these are the last words of David:

The oracle of David, the son of Jesse,

the oracle of the man who was raised on high,

the anointed of the God of Jacob,

the sweet psalmist of Israel:

Question 1.b

**2 Samuel 7:8-13**

8Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. 9And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. 10And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, 11from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. 12When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

**2 Samuel 7:16-17**

16 And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.’” 17 In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

Question 1.c

**Genesis 12:1-3**

1 Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Question 1.d

*(Tamar)* **Genesis 38:6-30** (rather than reading 24 verses, read this summary below!)

“[Tamar is] the Canaanite daughter-in-law of Judah, whom Judah promised successively to each of his three sons as each older one died without [a son] (Gen. 38:1–30). When Judah withheld Shelah, his youngest, fearing to lose him also, Tamar disguised herself as a prostitute and offered herself to her father-in-law. When she was exposed by her pregnancy, she identified her partner [Judah], who confessed that she had acted ‘more righteously’ than he (Gen. 38:26). Tamar bore twins to Judah, Perez and Zerah. Through Perez she is reckoned to the ancestry of David (Ruth 4:12, 18–22; 1 Chron. 2:4) and Jesus (Matt. 1:3).”[[4]](#footnote-3)

**Joshua 6:22-25**

22 But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, “Go into the prostitute's house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her.” 23 So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel. 24 And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. 25 But Rahab the prostitute and her father's household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

**Ruth 1:1-4, 16-18**

1 In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. 2 The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. 3 But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. 4 These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years…

16 But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. 17 Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.” 18 And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.

**2 Samuel 11:1-5**

1 In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

2 It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. 3 And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, “Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?” 4 So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned to her house. 5 And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, “I am pregnant.”

## 

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

Gospels are primarily “Reflective Texts.” The writers of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) “reflect” on how Jesus fulfilled God’s plan for the world by highlighting who Jesus is and how people respond to Him. We will repeat the same “reflective” questions each week in order to help you to think about what Matthew is saying about how Jesus fulfilled God’s plan for the world. Sometimes, some questions won’t apply! So, simply to answer the ones which seem to be answered in this week’s passage.

* + What do we learn about who Jesus is?
  + What does Jesus say He has come to do?
  + How does Jesus help people to see their need of Him?
  + What appears to be keeping or have kept people from responding to Jesus?
  + What response is Jesus calling from those He meets?



***Apply to Our Story***

**ADORATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

**CONFESSION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

**SUPPLICATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

# Lesson 2 | The Birth of the King

Matthew 1:18 - 2:23

***Look at the Text: Understand their Story***

Begin your study in prayer. In last week’s lesson, we saw how Matthew aimed to prove that Jesus was the king, who would eternally sit on David’s throne and bless the whole world, by presenting his royal genealogy. This week we’ll see how Matthew continues his apologetic argument by demonstrating that Jesus was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Read Matthew 1:18-2:23 and work through the questions below!

1. **WHAT** are the major events? Summarize each section to understand the flow of the narrative:
   1. 1:18 - 1:25
   2. 2:1 - 2:12
   3. 2:13 - 2:15
   4. 2:16 - 2:18
   5. 2:19 - 2:23
2. **WHO** are the people in these chapters and **WHAT** do you learn about them?
   1. *Mary*
      1. **WHAT** is the status of her relationship to Joseph?
      2. **WHAT** does the text say about the nature of her pregnancy?
      3. **WHAT** does Matthew 1:25 tell you about Mary and Joseph’s relationship?
         1. **WHY** do you think Matthew included this detail?
   2. *Joseph*
      1. **WHAT** do you learn about Joseph’s character in 1:19?
         1. In light of your answer to a.i. above, **WHY** do you think Joseph is called Mary’s husband in 1:19?
      2. **WHAT** does Joseph do each time an angel gives him instructions in this text? (1:24, 2:13-14, 2:20-21)? **WHAT** do Joseph’s actions communicate about his character?
         1. How do Joseph’s actions challenge or encourage you today?
   3. *Herod*
      1. **WHAT** is Herod’s reaction to the wisemen’s questions?
      2. **WHAT** information did Herod obtain from the wisemen and how did he use that information?
      3. **HOW** would you describe Herod’s character? **WHY** would you describe it this way?
   4. *The Wise Men*
      1. **WHY** have the wisemen traveled from the east to Jerusalem?
      2. **HOW** do they respond when they see the star?
      3. **WHAT** is their response to Jesus?
         1. How does their response to the star and to Jesus challenge or encourage you today?

3**. WHERE** do events take place in this narrative? List each location and find them on the map on page 130.

4**. WHEN** do events take place in this narrative?

1. **WHEN** had the star initially appeared?
2. **WHEN** do Joseph and Mary return to Israel?   
   1. If you have time, do a quick on-line search to see if you can find out approximately what year this event occurred.

5. **WHY** do you thinkMatthew emphasizes the following themes?

1. *The King -* Circle or mark every time that the word “Christ” and “king” and “ruler” comes up in these chapters.[[5]](#footnote-4)
   1. **WHO** are the two different people Matthew refers to as “the king”?
      * 1. **WHY** do you think he does this?

b**.**  *Behold -* In Jewish narrative, the word “behold” was used to focus people’s attention on something or someone important. When you see this word in the Bible, imagine someone tugging on your arm, pointing, and saying, “Wow! Look at that!” Circle or mark the five times Matthew says, “Behold”.

i. **WHAT** five things does he want his readers to see?

* + - 1. **WHY** do you think he wants his readers to focus on these things?

c**.** *The Fulfillment of Prophecy -* What five prophecies are fulfilled in this text?

* + - 1. **WHY** do you think Matthew highlights the fulfillment of prophecy?

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story (Part 1)***

1. **…“to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet”**. As we noted in the previous section, Matthew is keen to draw attention to the fact that the events of Jesus’ birth and early days fulfill Old Testament prophecy. In this section, we’ll read the four Old Testament quotations in their original context, and then try to discern how and why Matthew brings them into his story.
   1. Matthew 1:23 is a direct quote of Isaiah 7:14. Read Isaiah 7:10-17 and answer the questions below:
      1. Who was the original prophecy spoken to?
      2. What does the LORD say will happen before the boy who was prophesied about in Isaiah would grow up? (see Isaiah 7:17, and then Isaiah 8:5-8)
   2. Matthew 2:6-7 is a direct quote of Micah 5:2. Read Micah 5:1-6 and answer the questions below:
      1. What threat was Israel facing in these verses?
      2. What hope does the LORD, through Micah, provide for His people in these verses?
   3. Matthew 2:15 contains a direct quote of Hosea 11:1. Read Hosea 11:1-7 and answer the questions below:
      1. Who is “the son” in Hosea 11:1?
      2. Who is Matthew referring to as “the son” in Matthew 2:15?
      3. What threat is Israel facing in Hosea 11:1-7? Why is Israel being threatened by this nation?[[6]](#footnote-5)
   4. Matthew 2:18 contains a direct quote of Jeremiah 31:15. Read Jeremiah 31:10-17 and answer the questions below:
      1. What had happened to Israel according to Jeremiah 31:10, 16-17? (eg. why was “Rachel[[7]](#footnote-6) weeping” in Jeremiah 31:15?)
      2. What hope does the LORD, through Jeremiah, provide for His people in these verses?
   5. Now that we’ve read all four prophecies individually, let’s analyze them together.
      1. What events are the prophecies originally addressing?
      2. What hope does the LORD provide in the midst of these predictions of trouble?
         1. Why do you think Matthew writes that these Old Testament prophecies about Israel being exiled to Assyria, and returning to the land are being fulfilled in Jesus’ birth and early life? (hint: what does Jesus teach His disciples about the Old Testament in Luke 24:25-27, and 24:44-47).

*If you are confused, don’t worry! We’ll work through this when we meet!*

* + - 1. *Bethlehem of Judea -*Why is Bethlehem significant to the story of Jesus?
         1. Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13 and answer the following questions:

What task does the LORD give to Samuel in this text?

Where does the LORD send Samuel?

Who is anointed by Samuel in this text?

Putting these pieces together, then, why is it significant that Jesus is also born in Bethlehem[[8]](#footnote-7)?

* + - 1. **…“we saw his star when it rose”.** In Matthew 2:2 the wisemen allude to an Old Testament prophecy which was made by a non-Israelite prophet in Numbers 24:17. Who was it?
         1. Read Numbers 24:15-19. Who is speaking this prophecy?

What do you know about this person? (If you studied Numbers with us last year, what do you remember about him? You can find a quick summary on-line here: [https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/eastons-bible-dictionary/](https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/eastons-bible-dictionary/Balaam))

Where is Balaam from?

Where does Matthew say the wise men are from (2:1)?

What do you think is the significance that Balaam and the wise men are non-Israelites, from “the east”?

* + - 1. **…”Rise… and go … for those who sought the child’s life are dead.”** In Matthew 2:20 the angel is echoing words said to another biblical character thousands of years earlier.

Read Exodus 4:18-20.

Who is God speaking to in this text?

What does this person eventually do for the nation of Israel?

1. What comparison do you think the angel is making between Jesus and this person, by echoing Exodus 4:18-20 in Matthew 2:20?

*What have you learned about Matthew’s portrayal of Jesus from reading these Old Testament texts? What is new and intriguing (or confusing!) for you?*

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

Gospels are primarily “Reflective Texts.” The writers of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) “reflect” on how Jesus fulfilled God’s plan for the world by highlighting who Jesus is and how people respond to Him. Answer the questions below which seem to be answered in this week’s passage.

* + What do we learn about who Jesus is?
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  + How does Jesus help people to see their need of Him?
  + What appears to be keeping or have kept people from responding to Jesus?
  + What response is Jesus calling from those He meets?



***Apply to Our Story***

**ADORATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

**CONFESSION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

**SUPPLICATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

**Matthew 1:18 - 2:23 (ESV)***LESSON TWO*

**1** 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child

from the Holy Spirit. 19 And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. 20 But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

23 “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). 24 When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, 25 but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

**2** Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; 4 and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 5 They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

6 “‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,

are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

for from you shall come a ruler

who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

7 Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” 9 After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. 11 And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. 12 And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” 14 And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt 15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

18 “A voice was heard in Ramah,

weeping and loud lamentation,

Rachel weeping for her children;

she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”

19 But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 saying, “Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead.” 21 And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. 23 And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

# Lesson 3 | Kingdom Preparation: In the Wilderness

Matthew 3:1 - 4:11

***Look at the Text: Understand their Story***

Begin your study in prayer. In our first two lessons Matthew has argued that Jesus is the true king of Israel. This week, we’ll learn about the kingdom itself. How close is the kingdom? Who can enter it? Is this kingdom in the world now, or somewhere else? Answer the following questions to find out!

1. **WHAT** are the major events? Summarize each section to understand the flow of the narrative:
2. 3:1 - 4
3. 3:5 - 12
4. 3:13 - 17
5. 4:1 - 11
6. **WHO** are the people in these chapters and **WHAT** do you learn about them?
   1. *John the Baptist*
      1. **WHAT** two things did he do?
      2. **WHAT** was the core content of his message according to 3:1-12? **HOW** would you summarize his preaching?
      3. **WHO** is John the Baptist according to Isaiah’s prophecy (as quoted in Matthew 3:3)?
      4. **WHAT** does Matthew note about John’s appearance and lifestyle?
   2. *John’s audience*
      1. **WHERE** did people travel from to hear John the Baptist’s message?
      2. **WHAT** two things were people doing in response to his message?
         1. *Have you done these two things?*
      3. **WHO** does John rebuke in his audience? **WHY** does he rebuke them?
   3. *Jesus*
      1. **WHAT** does John tell the audience about Jesus (the one who is coming after Him) in verses 11-12?
      2. **WHY** does Jesus say that He needs to be baptized?
      3. **WHAT** does the voice from heaven say about Jesus, after He is baptized?
      4. **WHAT** happens to Jesus after He is baptized?
      5. **WHAT** question or challenge introduces each temptation dialogue? ( hint, “If \_\_\_\_”)
         1. Matthew 4:3
         2. Matthew 4:6
            1. How do these two “if” statements relate to Matthew 3:17?
         3. Matthew 4:9
            1. How does this “if” statement relate to Matthew 3:15?
      6. **WHAT** is the content of each temptation? What is Jesus being tempted to do?
      7. **HOW** does Jesus answer each of Satan’s temptations?
      8. **WHAT** happens at the end of the temptation scene (4:10-11)? **WHAT** do Jesus’ words tell you about His power?
   4. *The Holy Spirit (or Spirit of God / or Spirit)*
      1. **HOW** is the Holy Spirit described in this text? What does He do?
         1. *Does it surprise you that the Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted? Why or why not?*

3.  **WHERE** do events take place in this narrative? List each location and find them on the map on page 131.

4. **WHEN** do events take place in this narrative?

1. **HOW** many days and nights does Jesus fast?
   1. Do you know **WHY** He might have fasted for this length of time? Feel free to take a guess, and we’ll explore this more in the Gospel Connections section!

5. **WHY** do you thinkMatthew emphasizes the following themes?

1. *The kingdom -* Two different kingdoms are mentioned in these verses.
   1. **WHERE** do you see kingdoms referenced and **HOW** are they described?
2. **WHY** do you think Matthew mentions these two kingdoms?

*b. Behold -*Once again Matthew uses the word “Behold” to draw our attention to important details

i. **WHAT** three things does he want his readers to “behold”?

1. **WHY** do you think he wants his readers to focus on these things?

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story (Part 1)***

1. **…“this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah”**. Matthew continues on his theme of prophecy fulfillment by linking John the Baptist with Isaiah’s prophecy. John the Baptist, he says, was the one spoken of by the prophet Isaiah (Matthew 3:3). What is the significance of this claim?
   1. Matthew 3:3 is a direct quote of Isaiah 40:3. Read Isaiah 40:1-5 and answer the questions below:
      1. What did God want His people to know in the first two verses of Isaiah 40?
      2. In verse 3, who is the “voice” announcing? Who is coming to travel on the highway?
         1. If John the Baptist is the one preparing the way, who is Matthew claiming that Jesus is, by quoting Isaiah 40:3?
      3. What will happen when the LORD travels on this highway according to Isaiah 40:5?
         1. How do you anticipate that this part of the prophecy will be fulfilled in the rest of Matthew? What is Matthew writing about in his gospel?
2. **“Now John wore a garment of camel’s hair and a leather belt around his waist”** John’s clothing sounds like a strange fashion statement to us (!) but it had significance to his first century audience. Who else wore hairy garments with leather belts in the Bible?
   1. Read 2 Kings 1:1-8. Who is being described in this text?
   2. Read Malachi 4:1-6. What did Malachi prophesy about the day of the LORD? Who will God send, and what will He do?
   3. Now read Matthew 17:9-13. What does Jesus say about how Malachi 4:1-6 was fulfilled?
      1. What do these passages help you understand about the role of John the Baptist?
3. **“... he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased”** After Jesus’ baptism, the Spirit of God descends on Him, and a voice from heaven (God the Father) affirms that Jesus is His son. These events and words are significant in themselves, but they have added significance in light of the complete biblical narrative. What else do we learn about the LORD’s Spirit and the LORD’s son[[9]](#footnote-8) in other passages?
   1. Read Isaiah 42:1-4.
      1. Upon whom will the LORD put His Spirit?
      2. What will this individual do, according to Isaiah?
   2. Read Psalm 2.
      1. What does the LORD say to His King in verse 7?
      2. What does He offer His Son in verse 8?
         1. How does this promise tie into the temptation narrative in Matthew 4?
      3. What should people do to the Son in verse 12?
         1. How does this warning and promise tie into John the Baptist’s sermon in Matthew 3?
            1. Putting the imagery from Isaiah 42 and Psalm 2 together, what kind of person will Jesus (God’s beloved son on whom His Spirit rests) be?
            2. *How does this picture of Jesus encourage or challenge you today?*
4. **“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights he was hungry.”** Matthew 4:1-11 shows us how Jesus triumphed over the devil at His temptation, and also draws a parallel between Jesus’ experience and the experience of Israel, God’s “other” firstborn son.
   1. Read Deuteronomy 9:7-11. Who else fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, and what happened while that person fasted?
   2. Read Numbers 14:26-35. This section of texts describes the LORD’s response to Israel when they refused to enter the Promised Land.
      1. How long will the Israelites suffer for their sins by wandering in the wilderness?
      2. What does each year in the wilderness represent?
   3. Read Deuteronomy 8:1-5.
      1. What did Moses say was the purpose of their time in the wilderness? What did Israel need to learn, according to Deuteronomy 8:3?
         1. In Matthew 4:4, Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3 as He successfully answers the devil’s first temptation. What does this tell us about Jesus?
   4. Read Deuteronomy 6:1-19. In this section of text, Moses gives instructions on how Israel should live when they enter the promised land.
      1. What instructions does he give them in Deuteronomy 6:13?
         1. Where do you see these words in Matthew 4:1-11?
      2. What instructions does he give them in Deuteronomy 6:16?
         1. Where do you see these words in Matthew 4:1-11?
            1. As you think about all you have learned in question #4, how is Jesus’ experience in the wilderness different from Israel’s?

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

Gospels are primarily “Reflective Texts.” The writers of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) “reflect” on how Jesus fulfilled God’s plan for the world by highlighting who Jesus is and how people respond to Him. Answer the questions below which seem to be answered in this week’s passage.

* + What do we learn about who Jesus is?
  + What does Jesus say He has come to do?
  + How does Jesus help people to see their need of Him?
  + What appears to be keeping or have kept people from responding to Jesus?
  + What response is Jesus calling from those He meets?



***Apply to Our Story***

**ADORATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

**CONFESSION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

**SUPPLICATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

# 

**Matthew 3:1 - 4:11 (ESV)***LESSON THREE*

**3** In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2 “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” 3 For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;

make his paths straight.’”

4 Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, 6 and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. 9 And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. 10 Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

11 “I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. 14 John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” 15 But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; 17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

**4** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” 4 But he answered, “It is written,

“‘Man shall not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 6 and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

“‘He will command his angels concerning you,’

and

“‘On their hands they will bear you up,

lest you strike your foot against a stone.’”

7 Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” 10 Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

“‘You shall worship the Lord your God

and him only shall you serve.’”

11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

# Lesson 4 | Kingdom Inauguration: In Galilee

Matthew 4:12-25

***Look at the Text: Understand their Story***

Begin your study in prayer. Last week we observed preparations for the inbreaking of the kingdom of heaven: John the Baptist announced that the kingdom was “at hand”, and then Jesus was baptized and led into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. Unlike the nation of Israel (which is identified as God’s son in the Old Testament), God’s beloved son, Jesus, remained obedient to the LORD while in the wilderness. As His time of temptation drew to a close, Jesus commanded Satan to depart and was ministered to by angels. The time has now come for Him to begin His public ministry. How does He make Himself known? Work through the questions below and find out!

1. **WHAT** are the major events? Summarize each section to understand the flow of the narrative:
2. 4:12 - 17
3. 4:18 - 22
4. 4:23 - 25
5. **WHO** are the people in these chapters and **WHAT** do you learn about them?
6. *John the Baptist*
   1. **WHAT** new fact do we learn about him?

b*. Jesus*

i. **WHAT** did Jesus do when John was arrested?

* + 1. **WHY** do you think He did this? (the answer isn’t in the text but take a guess, and we’ll talk about it in the teaching time).
  1. **WHAT** was Jesus’ message?
     1. Who has said these words before (see Matthew 3:2)? What is the significance of both people using the same words?
  2. **WHAT** did Jesus command Simon, Andrew, James and John to do?
  3. **HOW** is His ministry summarized in Matthew 4:23-25? **WHAT** three things did He do?
  4. **WHAT** was the result of his ministry in Galilee?

*c. Jesus’ first disciples.*

i. **WHAT** were Simon and Andrew doing when Jesus saw them?

ii. **WHAT** did Simon and Andrew leave behind when they followed Him?

iii. **WHERE** were James and John when Jesus saw them?

iv. **WHAT** (and **WHO**) did James and John leave behind when they followed Him?

1. *Spend some time thinking about the profound message contained within this little story of five verses. What did their decision to follow Jesus cost these men?*
2. *If you are a follower of Jesus, what has your decision to follow Him cost you? If you are not yet a follower of Jesus, what potential costs are stopping you from following Him?*

d. *The crowds*

i. **WHERE** were the crowds of people from? List each location and find them on the map on page 130

ii. **WHAT** did the crowd do?

3. **WHERE** do events take place in this narrative? List each location and find them on the map on page 129.

4. **WHEN** do events take place in this narrative?

1. **HOW** quickly do His first disciples choose to follow Him?
2. **HOW** much time passes in these verses? Does the text give us any indication?

5**. WHAT** two reasonsdoes Matthew give for Jesus withdrawing into Galilee? What did His actions accomplish?

6. **WHY** do you think Matthew reports that Jesus preaches, teaches, proclaims the gospel AND heals every disease and affliction?

1. **WHAT** do these actions reveal about what is important to Jesus?
2. Based on these actions, **WHAT** do you think is the “gospel of the kingdom” which Jesus proclaims? (If you don’t have ideas, don’t worry! We’ll look at this more in the Gospel Connections and will keep coming back to it as we study Matthew).

7. ***HOW*** *has this week’s study re-shaped your understanding of Jesus’ ministry?*

8.  ***HOW*** *has this week’s study re-shaped your understanding of what it looks like to follow Jesus?*

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story (Part 1)***

1. **…“so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled.”** Again referring to Isaiah, Matthew claims that Jesus’ withdrawal into Galilee fulfilled an Old Testament prophecy. Let's investigate the text which Matthew pulls from in order to understand more fully what he is saying.
   1. Matthew 4:14-16 is an allusion (not a direct quote) of Isaiah 9:1-3.
      1. What had happened in the “former time” in this area?
         1. What do you think this means? (see Isaiah 8:5-8 for a hint)
      2. What will happen in the “latter time” according to Isaiah?
   2. Now, let’s read Isaiah 9:1-3 in its immediate context in order to understand it better.
      1. Isaiah 8:16-22 (the text right before Isaiah 9:1-3) describes what it looks like to walk in darkness. What kind of people are in darkness? What kind of things do they do?
         1. Is Isaiah describing physical darkness or spiritual darkness?
         2. How does Isaiah’s description of darkness tie into Jesus’ message? Read Matthew 4:17. What is Jesus’ first priority? What does He want people to do?
         3. Do you (or does someone you know) need to repent of living in darkness in order to enter the kingdom of heaven? Spend some time praying for yourself or others.
      2. Isaiah 9:4-7 (the text after Isaiah 9:1-3) describes how the light breaks into the darkness. What happens? Who appears to dispel the darkness?
         1. What does Matthew tell us about Jesus’ identity by quoting Isaiah’s prophecy?
         2. Spend some time praising Jesus for who He is!
2. **“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”** We can kind of understand what Jesus means by ‘fishers of men’, by simply reflecting on what fishermen do, and what it would look like to ‘catch’ people rather than fish! Did you know, however, that Jesus draws on this metaphor again later in Matthew’s gospel? Read the following passage to find out what He says.
   1. Read Matthew 13:47-50.
      1. What does the net being thrown into the sea represent?
      2. What does this net gather?
      3. What happens to the ‘fish’ when the net is full?
         1. How does this text encourage or challenge you today?
3. **“Immediately they left …. and followed him”.** Throughout Matthew’s gospel, Jesus is going to explain the cost of following Him. Read the following texts to see what He will say.
   1. Matthew 8:18-22. What is the cost of following Jesus according to these verses?
   2. Matthew 10:21-22, 34-37. What is the cost of following Jesus according to these verses?
   3. Matthew 12:46-50. Who are Jesus’ ‘mother and brothers’ according to these verses?
      1. Does this verse mean that Jesus doesn’t value relationships with His physical family, or does it mean something else?[[10]](#footnote-9)
         1. How do these verses challenge or encourage you today?
4. **“And he went throughout Galilee… healing every disease and affliction among the people.”** During His ministry, Jesus cared for people’s spiritual needs and physical needs. Physical healing, however, was not an end in itself: it also served to confirm His identity. Read the following texts to see what was prophesied about the Messiah, who was to come.
   1. Isaiah 29:18. What will happen “in that day”?
   2. Isaiah 35:1-7. What will happen when God comes to save the people?
   3. Isaiah 42:1-7. What will the servant do?
   4. Isaiah 61:1-4. In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus claims that Isaiah 61 refers to Him. What will He do according to these verses?

*When people rebelled against God at the beginning of the biblical story (Genesis 3), the effects of sin (death, pain, frustration and relational strife) entered the world. During Jesus’ ministry, the kingdom of heaven broke into the suffering of the world, and Jesus demonstrated His ability to heal “every disease and affliction” (Matthew 4:23). His time on earth gave us a glimpse of our future hope: when Jesus returns again, His kingdom will be fully established which will result in complete healing for His followers and for the earth.*

*As you end this week’s lesson, read, reflect and rejoice in the future promises of God found in Revelation 21:1-8 and Revelation 22:1-5.*

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

Gospels are primarily “Reflective Texts.” The writers of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) “reflect” on how Jesus fulfilled God’s plan for the world by highlighting who Jesus is and how people respond to Him. Answer the questions below which seem to be answered in this week’s passage.

* + What do we learn about who Jesus is ?
  + What does Jesus say He has come to do?
  + How does Jesus help people to see their need of Him?
  + What appears to be keeping or have kept people from responding to Jesus?
  + What response is Jesus calling from those He meets?



***Apply to Our Story***

**ADORATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

**CONFESSION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

**SUPPLICATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

**Matthew 4:12 - 4:25 (ESV)***LESSON FOUR*

**4** 12 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

15 “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,

the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

16 the people dwelling in darkness

have seen a great light,

and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death,

on them a light has dawned.”

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

18 While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them. 25 And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

# 

# Lesson 5 | The Message of the Kingdom: The Sermon on the Mount Pt 1

Matthew 5:1-16

***Look at the Text: Understand their Story***

Begin your study in prayer.Up to this point in his gospel, Matthew has shown that Jesus was the one true King Israel had been longing for. Over the next four lessons we will study the Sermon and the Mount. In His sermon, Jesus teaches His followers what it means to *be a citizen* of the Kingdom of heaven. He begins with a list of blessings called the beatitudes.

1. Summarize **WHAT** Jesus is teaching in each section to understand the flow of logic:
   1. 5:1-2
   2. 5:3-12
   3. 5:12
   4. 5:12-16
2. **WHERE** does this scene take place?
3. **WHAT** do we learn about Jesus in this passage?

1. **WHO** is Jesus teaching?
   1. **WHAT** does that mean about His listeners/audience? (Think back to last week's lesson - what 2 groups of people would have been listening to this sermon?) **WHO** is Matthew telling us Jesus is aiming these teachings for?
2. Because Matthew wants his readers to understand that God’s Kingdom is very different from our expectations, make note of every reference to the Kingdom of Heaven.
   1. **WHAT** does this passage teach us about the kingdom?
3. Jesus begins His sermon with a list of blessings called the Beatitudes. Look up or google search what the word “*beatitude”* means.
4. Let’s examine **WHO** Jesus calls blessed. Spend some time thinking about what each particular beatitude means. The first one has been done for you as an example:

| **Blessed are:** | **For:** | **What this means:** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| V3 - *the poor in spirit* | *Theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.* | *Those with spiritual need (not those who believe they have no spiritual need) are the ones with the overflowing abundance of the Kingdom of heaven!* |
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1. ***HOW*** *does Jesus' description of being blessed differ from your ideas of what it means to be blessed? How does this challenge you?*
2. According to Jesus, **WHAT** can His committed followers expect?
   1. What are they to do when they experience this sort of thing?
   2. What would be encouraging for them to know?
   3. Those listening to Jesus had been long awaiting the promised King. What do you think they hoped His Kingdom would look like? Do you think Jesus would have been describing what they hoped for?
3. In vs 13-16, **WHAT** imagery does Jesus use for His followers in this world?
   1. **WHAT** do both of these images have in common?
   2. **WHAT** does Jesus teach can happen to salt? *Think about what this means.*
   3. **WHAT** does Jesus tell us He means by being light? **WHAT** is the purpose of living life on display like this?
4. ***HOW*** *has this week’s study re-shaped your understanding of what it looks like to follow Jesus?*

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story (Part 1)***

1. Commentators note that Matthew tells his readers about Jesus’ teaching in a way that would have brought to mind some significant portions of the Old Testament. Let’s look closer at what Matthew intends to communicate to his readers by making these connections.
   1. Read Exodus 19:1-6
      1. Where is this event taking place? Where is Moses?
      2. What does God remind His people about before He discusses their obedience?
      3. Scan Exodus 20:1-17
         1. What does God remind His people of before He goes on to give them the law?
      4. How is the order of the events in Exodus reflected by the order of the Sermon on the Mount? What do you think Jesus is reminding His followers in this section before He goes on to “expound on the law” in the rest of the sermon?
   2. Read Isaiah 61:1-4
      1. How is this similar to what Jesus is teaching in Matt 5:1-12?

* + 1. What do you think Mattthew intended these similarities to communicate?
  1. Read Isaiah 61:10-11.
     1. What is the reality that causes God’s people to rejoice?
     2. *What are the things you rejoice in? How does Isaiah 61 and Matthew 5:1-16 challenge you this week?*

1. **“Blessed are….”**
   1. **.…”the poor in spirit”…**Let’s take a closer look at why Jesus would highlight the need to be “**poor in spirit, mourn, meek and hunger and thirst for righteousness”**.
      1. In the book of Revelation Jesus instructed John to write letters to the churches. Read the letter dictated for the Church of Laodicea in Revelation 3:14-22.
         1. What does this church think of themselves?
         2. What is their true condition?
         3. Why do they need to be aware of their real need? What will be the result of being aware of their real need?
      2. *We often don’t want to sit and ponder the reality of our spiritual need because it is both painful and counter-cultural to acknowledge the depth of our inadequacies. However, it is an important component of the Christian life. Jesus said those who comprehend the depth of their need are blessed because that is the heart posture needed to enter the Kingdom. Spend some time praying about the reality of your heart and need.*
   2. **“…you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account”.** Let’s take a closer look at how this suffering would be considered a blessing.
      1. Read James 5:7-11
         1. How does James describe a person who is experiencing suffering for the sake of Christ?
      2. Read 1 Peter 3:8-17
         1. What does Peter say is the reason Christians will suffer?
         2. How should we respond to this sort of suffering?
2. **“You are the light of the world”.** It can be easy to rush over Jesus' statement about His followers' call to be salt and light in the world. Let’s take a closer look at what it means to live in this way.
   1. Read Isaiah 42:6-8
      1. Who is the light in this passage?
      2. What is the purpose of them being a light?
   2. Read Ephesians 5:1-21
      1. List what Paul says it looks like to walk in darkness.
      2. What causes us to live as children of light?
      3. What does v 8 tell us to do?
      4. What does v 11-13 add to your understanding of what it means to be light in the world?
   3. Read Philippians 2:12-18
      1. According to this passage, what will make us “shine” as light?
   4. How does Matt 5:16 help us understand what would expose the darkness? How does this help you to understand how to be salt and light in the world?
   5. *As our culture becomes increasingly opposed to orthodox Christian beliefs, it becomes increasingly dangerous to be salt and light, but the intensifying darkness in the world makes the light more important. How do these passages challenge you to live in the cultural moment you find yourself in? Is there a particular area or relationship that comes to mind? Spend time contemplating and praying about this.*

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

Gospels are primarily “Reflective Texts.” The writers of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) “reflect” on how Jesus fulfilled God’s plan for the world by highlighting who Jesus is and how people respond to Him. Answer the questions below which seem to be answered in this week’s passage.

* + What do we learn about who Jesus is?
  + What does Jesus say He has come to do?
  + How does Jesus help people to see their need of Him?
  + What appears to be keeping or have kept people from responding to Jesus?
  + What response is Jesus calling from those He meets?



***Apply to Our Story***

**ADORATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

**CONFESSION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

**SUPPLICATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

**Matthew 5:1- 5:16 (ESV)***LESSON FIVE*

**5** Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

5 “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

13 “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

14 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

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# Lesson 6 | The Message of the Kingdom: The Sermon on the Mount Pt 2

Matthew 5:17-48

***Look at the Text: Understand their Story***

Begin your study in prayer.Having given His listeners an understanding of the blessings that belong to those who are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus now goes on to explain the sort of righteousness that is required of these citizens.

1. Summarize the content of this portion of the sermon in order to better understand the flow of logic:
   1. 5:17-20
   2. 5:21-48
      1. 5:21-26
      2. 5:27-30
      3. 5:31-32
      4. 5:33-37
      5. 5:38-42
      6. 5:43-47
   3. 5:48
2. **WHAT** does this passage teach us about Jesus?
   1. When Jesus refers to the law or the prophets it is a way of saying the scope of the Old Testament Scriptures. **WHAT** then does Jesus tell His listeners about Himself?
3. List what you learn about **WHO** God is in this passage?
4. **WHAT** repeated phrases or formula of argument do you see in this text?
5. **WHAT** do we learn about the law/commandments?
6. Make note of every reference to the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of God. **WHAT** do you learn about God’s kingdom?
   1. **WHAT** are the entrance requirements?
7. In Judaism, the scribes and Pharisees were the greatest possible example of righteousness. Their concern was to obey what was “required” of them in the law. Yet, Jesus calls His followers to have a righteousness that *exceeds* that of the scribes and Pharisees. He goes on to give examples from the law. Use the chart below to look closer at **WHAT** Jesus is teaching about possessing a exceeding righteousness:

|  | The Command/Teaching  *“You have heard…”* | Jesus interprets the law to mean  “But *I say…”* |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5:21-26 |  |  |
| 5:27-30 |  |  |
| 5:31-32 |  |  |
| 5:33-37 |  |  |
| 5:38-42 |  |  |
| 5:43-47 |  |  |

1. In 5:23-26 **WHO** are the people Jesus says to reconcile with?
   1. **WHAT** locations does he mention?
   2. **WHAT** does this teach us about how and why one should deal with discord in relationships?
2. In 5:29-30 **WHAT** do we learn about sin and how to deal with it?
3. In 5:43-48 **WHAT** reason does Jesus give for loving our enemies?
4. **WHAT** is Jesus' command in 5:48?
5. ***HOW*** *has this week’s study re-shaped your understanding of Jesus’ ministry?*
6. ***HOW*** *has this week’s study re-shaped your understanding of what it looks like to follow Jesus?*

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story (Part 1)***

1. ***“*Do not think I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them.”** The scribes and Pharisees wanted to extend or restrict the permissions of the law, but Jesus expounds on the law inorder to show the true meaning of the law. Let’s first look at just one example of Jesus' interpretation of the law.
   1. Leviticus 24:17-23.
      1. What are the provisions for retribution in the law?
   2. Deuteronomy 19:15-21
      1. What is the process that needs to occur before this sort of retribution takes place? Who judges the testimony?
   3. Instead of enacting this retribution, how does Jesus, in Matthew 5, change how His listeners would have thought of following the law of retribution?
   4. Romans 12:14-21
      1. What does this passage say about retribution?
      2. What enables a person to leave retribution/vengeance to the LORD?
   5. 1 Peter 2:17-25
      1. What is the example of Jesus that Peter called for Jesus’ followers to enact?
   6. How does the example in Matthew 5 of the law of retribution and exceeding righteousness help you understand how Jesus doesn’t abolish, but fulfills the law?

As mentioned above, the term “the Law and the Prophets” was a way to indicate the entire Jewish scriptures. Jesus claimed He fulfilled all the law, so beyond having the authority to interpret the law correctly, He also is what the law and prophets are meant to point to.

* 1. Exodus 20:1-17
     1. What does God remind His people of before He goes on to give them the law?
     2. Who does God use to deliver the law to His people?
  2. Scan through Exodus 21-23. What are the headings for the laws you see?
  3. Exodus 24:3 is Israel’s response to all that Moses relayed to them from the LORD?
  4. Deuteronomy 29:2-4
     1. What does Moses say is the problem with the people?
     2. How does the way Jesus speaks of the law in Matthew 5 highlight this problem?
  5. Deuteronomy 30:1-6
     1. Moses speaks of the future when the people of Israel would be expelled from the land. What is the future promise Moses reminds the people of in verse 6?
     2. How does Jesus' interpretation of the law help us see the need for this work?
  6. Jeremiah 31:31-34
     1. What is the promise that is given to the people in this passage?
     2. How do you think that Jesus’ teaching indicates that He will be the way for the people to receive this promise?

1. **“If your eye causes you to sin…”** Jesus is using hyperbole rather than literally requiring we gouge out our eye and cut off our hands. Let’s take a closer look at sin and how we should deal with it.
   1. 2 Samuel 11:1-5
      1. This passage records David’s sin of adultery. Where did this begin?
   2. Job 31:1-8
      1. In this passage, Job is pleading his case before the LORD. What is Job’s commitment to stay away from sin?
      2. Where does he know the heart will go?
   3. Proverbs 6:21-29
      1. What is the warning in this passage? How “safe” are we when we entertain sin?
2. **“You must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect….”** The Greek word translated “perfect” is the word “teleios” which means complete or mature. This is the goal of spiritual growth. As citizens of God’s Kingdom, followers of Christ are on a trajectory of growth to maturity to display God’s character to those around them.
   1. Colossians 1:24-28 and 4:12
      1. What is the motivating factor for Paul’s and Epaphras’s toils and struggles?
   2. James 1:2-4
      1. What is the end goal of the trials James is talking about?
   3. Genesis 15:1-6
      1. How is Abraham made righteous?
   4. Romans 4:20-25
      1. What does this passage say about the faith of Abraham? What did Abraham’s faith mean he believed?
      2. Where does our righteousness come from?
   5. *Is there an area where this portion of the Sermon on the Mount has convinced you to grow this week? Spend time praying that God would grow you up in this area.*

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

Gospels are primarily “Reflective Texts.” The writers of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) “reflect” on how Jesus fulfilled God’s plan for the world by highlighting who Jesus is and how people respond to Him. Answer the questions below which seem to be answered in this week’s passage.

* + What do we learn about who Jesus is?
  + What does Jesus say He has come to do?
  + How does Jesus help people to see their need of Him?
  + What appears to be keeping or have kept people from responding to Jesus?
  + What response is Jesus calling from those He meets?



***Apply to Our Story***

**ADORATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

**CONFESSION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

**SUPPLICATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

**Matthew 5:17 - 5:48 (ESV)***LESSON SIX*

**5** 17 “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. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

21 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ 22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. 23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. 26 Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

27 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

31 “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ 32 But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

33 “Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’ 34 But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.

38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ 39 But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. 41 And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. 42 Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

# Lesson 7 | The Message of the Kingdom: The Sermon on the Mount Pt 3

Matthew 6:1-34

***Look at the Text: Understand their Story***

Begin your study in prayer. Last week we learned that Jesus came to fulfill the law, not abolish it, and the extent to which the law demands righteousness. This week we will study more of Jesus’ sermon as we examine what Jesus taught are the motivations and priorities of citizens of His Kingdom.

1. Summarizewhat Jesus is teaching in each section to understand the flow of logic:
   1. 6:1-18
   2. 6:19-24
   3. 6:25-34
2. **WHAT** do we learn about God the Father in this passage? What does Jesus repeatedly say about Him?
3. **WHAT** is the primary principle Jesus is teaching in vs 1-17?
   1. **WHAT** “righteous” deeds does He use to explain this principle?
   2. **WHO** does He use as negative examples?
      1. List **WHERE** they perform their deeds and **WHAT** Jesus exposes about their motivation?
      2. **WHAT** is the reward?
   3. In each example, **WHAT** does Jesus say to do instead? What is important about the reward?
4. Think back to **WHAT** Jesus has told people about their deeds/righteousness in the Sermon on the Mount so far:
   1. Look back to Matthew 5:13-16. Do you think Jesus is contradicting what He said? Why or why not?
   2. Look back to Matthew 5:20. **HOW** does what Jesus is saying in today’s passage help us to understand His warning that one’s righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees?
5. List **WHAT** Jesus teaches us about how *NOT* to pray.
   1. **WHY** do the gentiles pray in this way?
   2. **WHY** do Jesus’ followers *not* need to pray in such a way?
   3. Instead of praying like the gentiles, Jesus gives us an example of what prayer should look like.
      1. **WHO** and **WHAT** is the focus of verses 9 & 10?
      2. **WHO** and **WHAT** is the focus of vs 11-13? Why do you think this focus follows the prior focus?
      3. *How does this challenge you to pray differently?*
   4. **HOW** does the Lord’s Prayer add to (or shape) Jesus’ teaching on forgiveness?”
   5. **WHAT** does Jesus teach about fasting?
6. Read vs 19-24. List the *contrasts* Jesus makes in this section of the passage.
   1. **WHAT** command does Jesus give His followers in this passage?
      1. **WHAT** is the reason He gives for teaching this command?
   2. In light of this, **WHAT** do Kingdom citizens live for? **WHAT** do those who are *not* citizens of God’s Kingdom live for?
7. Read vs 25-34. **WHAT** does Jesus command in this section of the passage?
   1. List the things Jesus mentions we should not be anxious about?
   2. **WHAT** reasons does Jesus give to *not* worry about these things?
   3. **WHAT** should we concern ourselves with instead?
   4. **WHAT** do you think anxious worry indicates about where our heart is and whose kingdom we are really seeking?
8. With the entire passage in mind, how would you summarize what people who are seeking their own Kingdom live for? How is that different from those who are seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness?
9. *How has this week’s study re-shaped your understanding of what it looks like to follow Jesus?*
10. *How has this week’s study re-shaped your understanding of Jesus’ ministry?*

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story (Part 1)***

*Note: Because the Sermon on the Mount content is so rich, this Gospel Connections is a little longer than most weeks.*

1. **“Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them….”** Here, Jesus addresses the motivating factor for righteous deeds and the reward.
   1. 1 Chronicles 28:9-10
      1. What plea does David make to his son, Solomon?
      2. What sort of obedience does this indicate?
   2. 2 Chronicles 16:7-9
      1. What does this narrative tell us about God?
   3. Proverbs 15:3 & Proverbs 21:2
      1. What do these proverbs teach us about God?
   4. John 5:39-47
      1. John records Jesus confronting the Jews. Where do those Jesus confronts receive their glory?
   5. 1 Thessalonians 2:2-6
      1. What motivates Paul in his endeavors to preach the gospel? Why does he work for this purpose?
   6. Galatians 1:10
      1. Again, Paul says he isn’t doing his work for the praise of man. What is the problem with trying to please man?
   7. *From all that we’ve learned in the Sermon on the Mount so far, how would it be possible to live out this sort of righteousness? How does this make you aware of your need for the grace of God?*
2. **“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name”...** Jesus begins His example of prayer drawing attention to specifics about God and His name. “God’s “name” is God Himself as he is and has revealed Himself, and so his name is already holy. Holiness, often thought of as “separateness,” is less an attribute than what he is.”[[11]](#footnote-10)
   1. Leviticus 19:1-2
      1. What does this passage say about who God is?
   2. Ezekiel 36:22-23
      1. What is God’s primary concern?
      2. How have the nations treated the name of God?
      3. Why will He vindicate His name?
      4. Why do you think God’s “name” is important? Why does this matter to God?
   3. Ezekiel 39:7-8
      1. What does God say He will do?
      2. What will be the end result?
      3. Jeremiah 34:8-16
         1. How have people profaned God’s name in this passage?
      4. Why do you think this request for God’s name to be hallowed is an important one?
      5. What sorts of things are we praying for when we ask God that His name be hallowed?

*Spend time today praying for this in your life, family, city, nation and world.*

3. **“But when you fast”....**Fasting is an often neglected practice, but Jesus seems to assume that His followers will participate in this spiritual practice - He says “when” not “if”. In Jesus time it is likely that Pharisees fasted twice a week[[12]](#footnote-11), so Jesus doesn’t condemn the practice, but the purpose. Looking to appear spiritual and humble should never be a reason for any spiritual habit or rhythm.

1. Daniel 9:1-10
   1. What is the reason Daniel fasts?
2. Nehemiah 9:1-3
   1. What is the purpose of corporate fasting in this narrative?
3. Isaiah 58:3-7
   1. What is the problem with those who are participating in fasting?
   2. Zechariah 7:2-7
      1. What is the real cause the people are fasting or eating?
   3. Acts 14:22-23
      1. What is the purpose of this instance of fasting in the early church?
      2. As you reflect on the Sermon on the Mount, what would be reasons for Christ’s followers to fast? How would abstaining from earthly “bread” for a set time be beneficial?
      3. If you want to learn more about fasting visit: <https://www.gotquestions.org/how-to-fast.html>

4. **“Therefore do not be anxious”*….*** As Jesus teaches His followers what it looks like to be citizens of His kingdom, He draws attention to the concerns of this life that have a tendency to occupy our thoughts, and why there is no need for that sort of distraction.

1. Psalm 147:7-9
   1. What care does the psalmist highlight?
2. Psalm 104:10-15, 27-30
   1. What does this psalm teach us about God’s provision?

1. James 4:13-15
   1. What are the people that James is addressing doing?
   2. According to James, what is the problem with this sort of focus on “tomorrow”?
2. Psalm 103:13 -19, Isaiah 40:6-8
   1. How is human life described in these passages?
   2. In light of this what does worry or anxiety accomplish?
3. Matthew 13:22
   1. What chokes out faith?
   2. What is the danger in concerning ourselves with these things?
   3. 1 Peter 5:6-8
      1. What are followers of Christ to do with their cares? Why?
   4. *In light of what we learned in this week’s lesson, why do kingdom citizens not need to occupy our minds with the sorts of things that the “gentiles” do?**Do these sorts of matters concern you? What**do**your worries indicate about our faith?*

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

Gospels are primarily “Reflective Texts.” The writers of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) “reflect” on how Jesus fulfilled God’s plan for the world by highlighting who Jesus is and how people respond to him. Answer the questions below which seem to be answered in this week’s passage.

* + What do we learn about who Jesus is?
  + What does Jesus say He has come to do?
  + How does Jesus help people to see their need of Him?
  + What appears to be keeping or have kept people from responding to Jesus?
  + What response is Jesus calling from those He meets?



***Apply to Our Story***

**ADORATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

**CONFESSION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

**SUPPLICATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

**Matthew 6:1 - 34 (ESV)***LESSON SEVEN*

**6** “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

2 “Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

5 “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

7 “And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. 9 Pray then like this:

“Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name.

10 Your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread,

12 and forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 “And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, 23 but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

24 “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? 28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

34 “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

# Lesson 8 | The Message of the Kingdom: The Sermon on the Mount Pt 4

Matthew 7:1 - 29

***Look at the Text: Understand their Story***

Begin your study in prayer. Last week**,** we learned about Jesus' condemnation of hypocritical and “divided” righteousness. Jesus now concludes this sermon with warnings of the implications for those who do not listen to His message.

1. Summarizewhat Jesus is teaching in each section to understand the flow of logic:
   1. 7:1-6
   2. 7:7-11
   3. 7:12
   4. 7:13-14
   5. 7:15-20
   6. 7:21-23
   7. 7:24-27
   8. 7:28-29
2. **WHAT** do we learn about Jesus in this passage?
3. **WHAT** do we learn about God the Father in this passage?
4. **WHAT** is Jesus' command about judging?
   1. **WHAT** images does Jesus use to illustrate the concept of judging others? What do you think He wants us to understand about our own sin?
      1. *Do you think of your sin this way, or does your “brother's” sin seem more serious than your own?*
   2. **WHAT** does Jesus say about confronting others about their sin?
   3. **WHAT** do you think Jesus means when He talks about dogs and pigs, and how do you think this connects with what He says about judging others? How does this help you understand what sort of judging is and isn’t?
5. **WHAT** does Jesus teach about petitioning the Father?
   1. **WHAT** three things does Jesus command and why?
   2. **WHAT** images does Jesus use to illustrate His point?
   3. In light of the rest of the Sermon on the Mount, **WHAT** do you think we would be asking the Father for? What should we consider to be “good things”?
6. **HOW** does Jesus summarize the law and the prophets?
   1. Think through what we have learned over the last 3 weeks. **HOW** does this coincide with what Jesus has been preaching about our relationships with others?
7. Jesus uses contrasting images to conclude His sermon. Let’s examine these contrasts and what end result each illustration points to:

|  | Image 1 | Result | Contrasting Image | Result |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 7:13-14 |  |  |  |  |
| 7:15-20 |  |  |  |  |
| 7:21-23 |  |  |  |  |
| 7:24-26 |  |  |  |  |

* 1. **WHY** do you think Jesus concludes His sermon in this way?

1. **WHAT** is the crowd's response to Jesus’ teaching? **WHY** do you think Matthew records this for us?

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story (Part 1)***

1. **“Judge not that you not be judged.”** This is an often quoted message of Jesus that is used to keep people from confronting others. Confronting and the sort of judgment Jesus condemns are not the same thing?
   1. James 4:11-12, 5:8-9
      1. According to these passages, what is considered passing judgment on others?

* + 1. What is the problem with this sort of judgment?
  1. Romans 2:1-5
     1. What is the problem with judging in this passage?
  2. Romans 14:10-12
     1. Who is the one who has the authority to judge?
     2. Ultimately, what are we doing when we judge others?
  3. Galatians 6:1-5
     1. How should a believer offer corrections for another believer?
     2. What must we be aware of before we approach someone about their sin?
  4. James 5:19-20
     1. What is important to do?
  5. In light of Jesus teaching, How does a realistic view of our own sin help us to confront others? Why is it important?

1. **“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves….”** False prophets were a risk to those seeking the kingdom of heaven because they would present a false way and a false kingdom. False prophets are nothing new, they were prevalent in the ancient world as they are now.
   1. Ezekiel 13:1-3, 8-10
      1. What is the source of the prophecy that the LORD condemns?
      2. What is the content of the false prophet’s message?
      3. With the Sermon on the Mount in mind, what way do false prophets present to their hearer?
   2. Acts 20:25-28
      1. Why does Paul consider himself innocent of the blood of all?
      2. What is Paul’s final warning to the elders in Ephesus?
      3. Where will the false teachers come from? What will they do?
   3. 2 Peter 2:1-3, 17-22
      1. What is Peter’s warning to the church?
      2. What sorts of false teaching will these teachers use to lure the people away from truth?
      3. What motivates the false teachers?
   4. What does Jesus warn his followers to look for inorder to identify false teachers?
   5. With the entire Sermon on the Mount in mind, how might we identify the content of false teaching? What would false teaching look like?
2. **“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many…”** As Jesus concluded His sermon, He presents two ways to choose from.
   1. Deuteronomy 30:15-20
      1. As Moses gives his departing words to the Israelites, what two ways does he present to them?
      2. What will be the end result for either option?
   2. Psalm 1
      1. What are the two ways presented in this Psalm?
      2. What is the end result of each?
   3. Proverbs 14:12
      1. What does this proverb say is the way to death?
   4. Acts 14:21-23
      1. How did Paul strengthen the souls of the disciples? What was important for them to keep in mind?
   5. In light of the Sermon on the Mount, what does this narrow path that leads to life look like?
   6. *How does Jesus’ teaching of the entire Sermon on the Mount encourage you to choose the narrow and difficult way?*

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

Gospels are primarily “Reflective Texts.” The writers of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) “reflect” on how Jesus fulfilled God’s plan for the world by highlighting who Jesus is and how people respond to him. Answer the questions below which seem to be answered in this week’s passage.

* + What do we learn about who Jesus is?
  + What does Jesus say He has come to do?
  + How does Jesus help people to see their need of Him?
  + What appears to be keeping or have kept people from responding to Jesus?
  + What response is Jesus calling from those He meets?



***Apply to Our Story***

**ADORATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

**CONFESSION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

**SUPPLICATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

**Matthew 7:1 - 29 (ESV)***LESSON EIGHT*

**7** “Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. 3 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

6 “Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? 11 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

12 “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

13 “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. 18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ 23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

24 “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. 26 And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

28 And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, 29 for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

# Lesson 9 | The King Demonstrates His Authority

Matthew 8:1 - 9:34

***Look at the Text: Understand their Story***

Begin your study in prayer. Over the past four lessons we’ve read that Jesus spoke with authority but we (and the crowds who heard him) know that words only carry so much weight! For people to establish the truthfulness of their claims, their words must be backed up by their actions. How does Jesus prove His authority? Work through today’s lesson and find out!

1. **WHAT** are the major events? Summarize each section to understand the flow of the narrative.

(Note: Because this section is so long, we grouped the events based on where they occurred)

1. 8:1-4 As Jesus comes down from the mountain
2. 8:5-17 In Capernaum
3. 8:18-34 Back & Forth across the Lake
4. 9:1-34 Back in Capernaum
5. **WHO** are the people in these chapters and **WHAT** do you learn about them?

| Who does Jesus encounter? | What problem is being addressed? | Who (if anyone) follows Jesus? | What is said about people’s faith? | What else is noteworthy in this section? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Matt 8:1-4 |  |  |  |  |
| Matt 8:5-13 |  |  |  |  |
| Matt 8:14-17 |  |  |  |  |

| Who does Jesus encounter? | What problem is being addressed? | Who (if anyone) follows Jesus? | What is said about people’s faith? | What else is noteworthy in this section? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Matt 8:18-22 |  |  |  |  |
| Matt 8:23-27 |  |  |  |  |
| Matt 8:28-34 |  |  |  |  |
| Matt 9:1-8 |  |  |  |  |
| Matt 9:9-13 |  |  |  |  |
| Matt 9:14-17 |  |  |  |  |
| Matt 9:18-26 |  |  |  |  |
| Matt 9:27-31 |  |  |  |  |
| Matt 9:32-34 |  |  |  |  |

1. As you look over the chart on pg 85-86, **WHAT** ideas and themes repeat in these verses?
2. **WHO** “marvels” in these verses? There are three different individuals / groups: what does each “marvel” about?
3. **WHO** does Jesus tell to “take heart”? There are two different individuals.
   1. **HOW** do Jesus’ tender words in these two situations encourage or challenge you today?
4. **WHAT** names are given to Jesus in this text and **WHO** gives Jesus each name?
   1. *Are you surprised by any of these pairings? (eg. by WHO calls Jesus WHAT)*
5. **HOW** does Jesus demonstrate that He is the King in these verses? List all the things that are proven to be under His authority.
6. **WHY** do you think Jesus tells the leper and the blind men not to tell anyone about their healing?
7. **WHY** do people come to Jesus in these chapters?
8. **WHY** do people resist coming to Jesus in these chapters?
   1. *Based on the answers to 9 and 10 above, how do you think you would have responded to Jesus if you lived during the time that He was on earth?*

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story***

1. **“I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness…”** In Matthew 8:10-12, Jesus marvels at the faith of the non-Jewish centurion, and prophesies that many people outside the Jewish faith will enter the kingdom of heaven through faith, while many Jews (who were the recipients of God’s promises and covenants in the Old Testament) will not. This was a controversial statement, but Jesus was not saying something new. Read the following passages to see how this truth had been previously communicated.
   1. Read Isaiah 59:14-21 and then focus on verse 19.
      1. From where will people fear His name?
      2. From where will they see His glory?
   2. Read Malachi 1:6-14. In this passage, God is rebuking His people (the Jews) for offering Him ‘polluted” sacrifices.
      1. How will God act in response to their actions?
      2. Where will His name be made great?
      3. Why will His name be made great? What does He affirm about Himself in verse 14?

As the biblical story continues to unfold after Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, this becomes a more concrete reality. Read the following passages to see how this truth is affirmed later in the New Testament.

* 1. Read Ephesians 3:4-6.
     1. What is the “mystery of Christ” according to Paul?
  2. Read Revelation 7:9-12.
     1. Who will stand before the throne and the Lamb?
     2. What will these people be doing and saying?

If you are Christian today, it is because of the “mystery of Christ”! Like the centurion, we are welcomed into the kingdom because of our faith, not our nationality. Praise God that His plan extends to all!

1. **‘This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: “He took our illnesses and bore our diseases.”’** Once again, Matthew quotes Isaiah to prove a point.
   1. Matthew quotes Isaiah 53:4, which is in the middle of a larger passage describing one whom God will send. Read Isaiah 52:13-53:6 to understand the context of this quotation.
      1. Who is Isaiah talking about in this passage (52:13)?
      2. What will this individual experience?
      3. What will this individual accomplish?
         1. With these answers in mind, when Matthew says that Jesus is the one who “took our illnesses and bore our diseases”, what is he affirming about Jesus’ identity?
2. **“Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the seas, and there was a great calm. And the men marveled, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?”** Some skeptics argue that Jesus does not ever claim to be God. In response, Christians point out that Jesus’ actions, and the words that gospel writers use to describe His actions, prove He is God. Read the following passages to work this out.
   1. Read Psalm 104:1-7.
      1. What is the Psalmist praising God for in the first 4 verses of this psalm?
      2. What does God “rebuke” in verses 6-7?
   2. Read Psalm 65:5-7.
      1. What does God do in these verses?
      2. What is the result of God’s action in these verses?
   3. Read Job 38:1-11
      1. Who is speaking to whom in these verses?
      2. What does God do to the sea in verses 8-11?
         1. With these Old Testament passages in mind, how would you answer the disciples: **“What sort of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey him?”**
3. **“Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’** The Pharisees question why Jesus eats with tax collectors and sinners. In response, Jesus quotes the Old Testament to them!
   1. Read Hosea 6:4-6
      1. What is God’s complaint with Ephraim and Judah[[13]](#footnote-12)?
      2. How has He punished them for their faithlessness?
      3. What does God desire?
         1. What is your default relationship with God? Do you simply do outward religious things (in this text sacrifices or burnt offerings) or do you offer Him your heart and your mind (steadfast love and knowledge of God)?
         2. Are you quick to offer mercy, or do you judge people by outward appearances?
         3. How do Jesus’ words challenge or encourage you today?

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

Gospels are primarily “Reflective Texts.” The writers of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) “reflect” on how Jesus fulfilled God’s plan for the world by highlighting who Jesus is and how people respond to him. Answer the questions below which seem to be answered in this week’s passage.

* + What do we learn about who Jesus is?
  + What does Jesus say He has come to do?
  + How does Jesus help people to see their need of Him?
  + What appears to be keeping or have kept people from responding to Jesus?
  + What response is Jesus calling from those He meets?



***Apply to Our Story***

**ADORATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

**CONFESSION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

**SUPPLICATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

**Matthew 8:1 - 9:34 (ESV)***LESSON NINE*

**8** When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. 2 And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.” 3 And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, “I will; be clean.” And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4 And Jesus said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to them.”

5 When he had entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, 6 “Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly.” 7 And he said to him, “I will come and heal him.” 8 But the centurion replied, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” 10 When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, “Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. 11 I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, 12 while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” 13 And to the centurion Jesus said, “Go; let it be done for you as you have believed.” And the servant was healed at that very moment.

14 And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. 15 He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. 16 That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. 17 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: “He took our illnesses and bore our diseases.”

18 Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. 19 And a scribe came up and said to him, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” 20 And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” 21 Another of the disciples said to him, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” 22 And Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.”

23 And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. 24 And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. 25 And they went and woke him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing.” 26 And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?” Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. 27 And the men marveled, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?”

28 And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes,[e] two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. 29 And behold, they cried out, “What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?” 30 Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. 31 And the demons begged him, saying, “If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs.” 32 And he said to them, “Go.” So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. 33 The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. 34 And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

**9** And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city. 2 And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven.” 3 And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming.” 4 But Jesus, knowing[a] their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? 5 For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? 6 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic—“Rise, pick up your bed and go home.” 7 And he rose and went home. 8 When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

9 As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.

10 And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. 11 And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” 12 But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13 Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

14 Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?” 15 And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. 16 No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made. 17 Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.”

18 While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.” 19 And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples. 20 And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, 21 for she said to herself, “If I only touch his garment, I will be made well.” 22 Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And instantly the woman was made well. 23 And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, 24 he said, “Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. 25 But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. 26 And the report of this went through all that district.

27 And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, “Have mercy on us, Son of David.” 28 When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to him, “Yes, Lord.” 29 Then he touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith be it done to you.” 30 And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, “See that no one knows about it.” 31 But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

32 As they were going away, behold, a demon-oppressed man who was mute was brought to him. 33 And when the demon had been cast out, the mute man spoke. And the crowds marveled, saying, “Never was anything like this seen in Israel.” 34 But the Pharisees said, “He casts out demons by the prince of demons.”

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# Lesson 10 | The King Delegates His Authority

Matthew 9:35 - 11:1

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***Look at the Text: Understand their Story***

Begin your study in prayer. In the text that we studied last week, Jesus’ powerful actions backed up His startling words in the Sermon on the Mount. He was not simply a bold teacher. He was able to cast out demons, rebuke the wind, forgive sins and raise the dead! This week, we’ll see a startling new development. Jesus is not limited to personally demonstrating God’s authority. He also can bestow His authority on others so that they can do the same great works. To whom does He delegate authority, and what are the “conditions”? Work through today’s lesson and find out.

1. **WHAT** are the major events or issues? Summarize each section to understand the flow of the narrative.
   1. 9:35-38
   2. 10:1-4
   3. 10:5-25
   4. 10:26-42
   5. 11:1
2. **WHO** are the people in these chapters and **WHAT** do you learn about them?
   1. *The crowds*
      1. **WHAT** was Jesus’ emotional response to them?
      2. **WHAT** words does Matthew use to describe their emotional and physical state?
      3. **WHAT** image does Matthew use to describe their emotional and physical state?
         1. *What do you think this means or looks like? How would you describe what He is trying to communicate?*
   2. *His Disciples*
      1. **WHAT** is the first command that He gives His disciples in this text?
         1. *Do you think this group of people is the same as those listed in 10:1? Why or why not?*
      2. **WHAT** does Jesus do, to begin to respond to this first command?
      3. **WHAT** does Jesus give His disciples authority over?
      4. **WHERE** are they supposed to go?
      5. **WHAT** are they supposed to do?
         1. *Do any of these commands surprise you? If so, which ones?*
         2. *What is the significance of the words which Jesus tells them to speak in 10:7? (need a hint? Who else said these words in Matthew 3:2 and Matthew 4:17?)*
      6. **WHAT** does Jesus warn them about?
      7. **WHY** will they be dragged before governors and kings? What will this accomplish?
         1. *Do you think the twelve are supposed to seek persecution and trouble? What information in this text helps you to answer this question?*
      8. **WHY** should they not be afraid? List all the reasons given in the text.
         1. *Which of these reasons for not being afraid encourages you the most today? Stop and praise God for what you learned about the way in which He cares for His people?*
      9. **WHAT** must one do to be worthy of Jesus?
         1. *Which of these demands convicts or challenges you the most?*
      10. **HOW** are His disciples linked with Jesus in 10:24-25?
      11. **HOW** are His disciples linked with Jesus in 10:40-42?
3. **WHY**, given all the warnings in this text, would people want to join Jesus in His mission? List as many possible motivations as you can, from these verses.

This is such a challenging text! We have gone over it thoroughly, but want it to sink deeply into your mind and heart. Read the verses one more time, and then focus on 9:35-38.

1. Do you know people who are harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd?
2. Do you have compassion on people who are harassed and helpless, like Jesus did? Or not?  
     
   1. *Pray that the LORD would grow your heart of compassion, and make you willing to step out into the unknown under His authority and protection.*

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story***

1. **“They were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd…”** This phrase is rich with biblical meaning. If you studied with us last year, it may ring a bell! Who said it first, and who else drew on this idea? Look at the verses below and find out.
   1. Numbers 27:12-23
      1. Who was worried that the nation of Israel would become sheep that have no shepherd?
      2. What did he ask the LORD to provide for the nation, so that this would not be their fate?
      3. Who did the LORD designate in response to Moses’ prayer?
   2. Ezekiel 34:1-6.
      1. Why is God rebuking Israel’s shepherds? (their leaders?)
      2. What has happened to the sheep as a result of the shepherds’ negligent leadership?
      3. What will God do in response to this problem, according to Ezekiel 34:11-16?
   3. John 10:1-6, 11-18. How is Jesus the “true and better Joshua”?
      1. What does He do for the sheep according to John 10:1-6?
      2. What will He do that no other shepherd has done according to John 10:11-18?
   4. 1 Peter 2:21-24. Peter is one of the disciples to whom Jesus is speaking in this text (Matthew 10:2). Years later, in a letter, Peter encourages other Christians by using similar language.
      1. How has Jesus saved people from being harassed and helpless according to Peter?
      2. What title is Jesus given in this text?
         1. *Is Jesus your Shepherd? Does He oversee your soul?*

*If so, praise Him! If not, why not?*

1. **“And he called to him his twelve disciples…”** What is the significance of Jesus choosing twelve disciples? Look up the following passages and find out.
   1. Skim Genesis 49:1-27, and then focus on Genesis 49:28.
      1. Who (which group of people) composed the original leadership structure of the nation of Israel?
   2. Read Exodus 24:3-8.
      1. In the covenant ceremony between God and the nation of Israel, what does Moses build into the altar?
      2. What do these pillars represent?
   3. Read Matthew 19:23-30.
      1. How does Jesus himself explain why He chose twelve disciples? What role will the twelve play in the future?
   4. Read Acts 1:12-26.
      1. In Acts 1:12-14, after Jesus is resurrected and has ascended into heaven the disciples are listed again, minus Judas Iscariot who committed suicide after betraying Jesus. In Acts 1:20b-26, what do the disciples feel called to do?
   5. Read Revelation 21:9-14.
      1. How is the holy city in the new heavens and new earth described?
         1. *Critics of the Bible sometimes say that it is a library of 66 distinct, unconnected books. How would you refute that idea based on our first two Gospel Connection questions this week?*
2. **“When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”**  Several times in His ministry, Jesus comforts His people with this promise (see also Mark 13:9-13, Luke 21:12-19) and as the New Testament story continues, we see this promise being fulfilled.
   1. Acts 4:1-13 records the first time the disciples are brought before the authorities.
      1. What happens to Peter as he begins to speak?
      2. How does the boldness of Peter and John impact the authorities?
   2. Acts 6:8-15.
      1. How is Stephen described in these verses?
      2. Who gives Stephen wisdom? What is the effect of this wisdom?
      3. Fast forward to the end of Stephen’s speech. How does he die according to Acts 7:54-60?
   3. 2 Timothy 4:14-18
      1. What happened to Paul in the past?
      2. What confidence does he have about the future, based on this past experience?
   4. 1 Peter 3:13-16
      1. What does Peter say that Christians should do in verse 15?
         1. Do you think that these instructions contradict Jesus’ instructions? Why or why not?

*Are you concerned about what you would say if you were questioned about your faith, or persecuted for your faith? Here’s some practical advice: Practice AND Pray! Practice: Grab a friend or family member and talk through what you are learning and practice verbalizing answers to questions that people have. Pray: for opportunities to speak God’s truth and for boldness when the opportunity arises.*

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

Gospels are primarily “Reflective Texts.” The writers of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) “reflect” on how Jesus fulfilled God’s plan for the world by highlighting who Jesus is and how people respond to him. Answer the questions below which seem to be answered in this week’s passage.

* + What do we learn about who Jesus is?
  + What does Jesus say He has come to do?
  + How does Jesus help people to see their need of Him?
  + What appears to be keeping or have kept people from responding to Jesus?
  + What response is Jesus calling from those He meets?



***Apply to Our Story***

**ADORATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

**CONFESSION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

**SUPPLICATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

**Matthew 9:35 - 11:1 (ESV)***LESSON TEN*

**9** 35 And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; 38 therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

**10** And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. 2 The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, 6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7 And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay. 9 Acquire no gold or silver or copper for your belts, 10 no bag for your journey, or two tunics or sandals or a staff, for the laborer deserves his food. 11 And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay there until you depart. 12 As you enter the house, greet it. 13 And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14 And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. 15 Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.

16 “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. 17 Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, 18 and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. 19 When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. 20 For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. 21 Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, 22 and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 23 When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next, for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

24 “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.

26 “So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. 28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. 30 But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. 32 So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, 33 but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

34 “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. 36 And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. 37 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

40 “Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. 41 The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. 42 And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

**11** When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.

# Lesson 11 | The King Warns and Invites

Matthew 11:2-30

***Look at the Text: Understand their Story***

Begin your study in prayer. In last week’s study we saw Jesus delegate authority to His disciples, and put them to work as an extension of His preaching and healing mission. He exhorted them to remain faithful to Him and to His message, because they would receive a mixed response from people, but a guaranteed reward from the Father if they followed in Jesus’ footsteps. This week we’ll investigate Jesus’ warnings for those who reject His own ministry, and His encouragement for those who accept Him. What is in store for each group? Read Matthew 11:2-30 and find out!

1. **WHAT** are the major events or issues? Summarize each section to understand the flow of the narrative.
2. 11:2-6
3. 11:7-19
4. 11:20-24
5. 11:25-30

2. **WHO** are the characters in this passage and **WHAT** are we told about them?

1. *John the Baptist*
   1. **WHERE** is John the Baptist at this time?
   2. **WHY** is he there? *The answer isn’t in this text, but consult Matthew 14:3 to find out.*
   3. **WHAT** prompted John to ask a question of Jesus?
2. *Disciples of John the Baptist*
   1. **WHAT** had John’s disciples asked Jesus in the past? (See Matthew 9:14)
   2. **WHAT** was the question John’s disciples were given to ask Jesus now?
      1. **WHY** do you think John wanted them to ask this question? Didn’t he know who Jesus was?
3. *Jesus*
   1. **WHERE** is Jesus at this time? See last week’s text (Matthew 11:1) if you don’t remember!
   2. **WHAT** was Jesus doing at this time?
   3. **WHAT** is Jesus’ answer to John’s disciples? What does He point to as evidence?
      1. **WHY** do you think He answers them with this evidence rather than simply saying “yes” or “no” to their question?
   4. **WHAT** does Jesus say about John’s ministry?
      1. **WHAT** do you think verse 11 means?
   5. **WHAT** does Jesus say about how people have responded to both John the Baptist and himself?
      1. **WHY** do you think they criticized both John the Baptist and Jesus, for entirely different things. What is Jesus pointing out about the state of their hearts?
   6. **WHAT** does Jesus say regarding Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum?
   7. **WHAT** does Jesus say about who will know God, and how they can know God?
      1. **WHAT** type of person will understand, according to this text?
      2. **WHAT** type of person will come to Him, according to this text?
4. *The crowds*
   1. **WHERE** have the crowds gathered from (as best as we can tell)?

3. **WHEN** did these things happen? What had Jesus been doing before this passage?

As you finish this part of your study, reflect on which group you are most closely aligned to…

* *Have you read about or seen the mighty works of Jesus but refuse to repent? OR*
* *Have you come to Jesus for rest? Have you taken his yoke upon you? Are you learning from him?*
  + *Spend some time praying for yourself, or others, who may be resisting Jesus. Pray that the Father would reveal Jesus to them.*

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story (Part 1)***

1. **“There has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist”.** As Jesus speaks to the crowds concerning John, He points to a few Old Testament passages to validate and explain John the Baptist’s ministry.

1. Matthew 11:10 quotes Malachi 3:1. Read Malachi 2:17-3:5.
   1. Read Malachi 1:1. Who was Malachi’s prophecy given to?
   2. Who was going to come after this messenger?
   3. What were they coming to do?
2. Matthew 11:14 makes reference to Malachi 4:5. Read Malachi 4:1-6.
   1. What does this prophecy warn about?
   2. What was the message of this future Elijah intended to do for those who heard it?
3. According to these two references, what kind of message was John the Baptist proclaiming during his ministry?
   1. What warning was God providing through John?
   2. What hope was God providing for His people through John?

2. “**Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?”.** As Jesus answers the question posed by Johns’ disciples, He points to Old Testament categories to validate His identity as “the one who is to come”. He references Isaiah 35:5-6, 29:18 and 61:1 to prove that He is the anticipated Messiah.

1. Read Isaiah 35:3-7.
   1. Who will cause the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk?
   2. What do these kinds of signs reveal about the nature of Jesus’ mission?
2. Read Isaiah 29:13-21.
   1. What are the marks of God’s restoration of Israel in vv. 18-21?
   2. What was the state of Israel in vv. 13-16? What was their attitude towards God?
   3. Note the sharp transition that takes place between v. 16 and v. 17. Does the attitude of the people at all prevent God from bringing about his plans for his people? What does this reveal about the certainty of Jesus’ messianic mission amidst the doubts that people have of him?
3. Read Isaiah 61:1-3.
   1. What is the “good news” that was to be preached?
   2. Who was this “good news” to be proclaimed to in vv 1-2? (eg. what types of people are getting good news? Are they physically poor, or poor in some other way?)
   3. To whom has Jesus brought this “good news” at this point in His ministry? (Scan chapters 8-9 as a reminder)
   4. What do these initial signs of the arrival of this “good news” point ahead to? (Or to put it another way, what will Jesus do to *fully* bring about “the year of the Lord’s favor”, from Is. 61:2?)?

3. **“My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”** The promise that Jesus makes for those who respond well to Him is the same kind of promise that God has long made for His people; that they would find rest. What does it mean to find rest, though? Many times this text is quoted with pictures of beach chairs in the background! Is this the kind of rest that Jesus is talking about?

1. Read Deuteronomy 12:8-14.
   1. What kind of rest was God promising to His people? (i.e. what were they resting *from* and what were they resting *in*?)
   2. What was that rest dependent upon?
2. Read Psalm 95:6-11.
   1. What does the Psalmist say about whether or not Israel entered God’s rest? What reason is given?
3. Read Jeremiah 6:16-19.
   1. How could God’s people have found rest for their souls?
   2. What did Israel choose instead, and what did it bring them?
4. How does Jesus tell His listeners in Matthew 11:28-29 that they will be able to enter this rest? What are the three things they need to “do” in order to enter this rest?

1. How does this invitation to rest help us to understand the purpose behind other things we’ve read in Matthew, like the Sermon on the Mount (chs. 5-7)? eg) How would knowing the Sermon on the Mount help people to enter His rest?

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

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***Apply to Our Story***

**ADORATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

**CONFESSION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

**SUPPLICATION**

In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

# 

**Matthew 11:2 - 11:30 (ESV)***LESSON ELEVEN*

**11** 2 Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples 3 and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” 4 And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5 the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. 6 And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

7 As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. 9 What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10 This is he of whom it is written,

“‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face,

who will prepare your way before you.’

11 Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. 12 From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. 13 For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, 14 and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. 15 He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

16 “But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their playmates,

17 “‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;

we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.’

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ 19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.”

20 Then he began to denounce the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent. 21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I tell you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. 23 And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You will be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I tell you that it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you.”

25 At that time Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; 26 yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. 27 All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. 28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

# Lesson 12 | Conflicts With the King

Matthew 12: 1 - 50

***Look at the Text: Understand their Story***

Begin your study in prayer. In last week’s study we saw how Matthew related Jesus’ warnings to those who reject His ministry, and His encouragement to those who accept Him. This week we’ll see how Jesus came into conflict with the religious leaders of His day, and how those conflicts reveal Jesus’ identity. Read Matthew 12:1-50 and work through the questions below!

1. **WHAT** are the major events or issues? Summarize each section to understand the flow of the narrative.
   1. 12:1-8

* 1. 12:9-21
  2. 12:22-45
  3. 12:46-50

1. **WHERE** do these events take place? (Note: city names are not mentioned, but there are still specific locations.)
2. **WHEN** do they take place (what had Jesus been doing before these events)?
3. **WHO** witnesses these events?
4. Biblical authors often group parallel stories together in order to highlight an idea or issue. Matthew seems to be doing this in this chapter. Read the stories again, looking at the details which are compared and contrasted to see what he is communicating.

| **WHO** are the Characters & **WHAT** are they in conflict about? | **WHAT** does Jesus do to ‘win’ the conflict? (eg. What does He say about the rationale behind his actions, or the source of His power?) | **HOW** do the Pharisees respond? |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Story #1  12:1-2 | Story #1  12:3-8 | Story #1  12:10b |
| Story #2  12:10 | Story #2  12:11-12 | Story #2  12:14 |
| Story #3  12:22-24 | Story #3  12:25-29 | Story #3  12:38 |
| What Matthew is highlighting about Jesus’ identity and power? | | |
| What Matthew is highlighting about the Pharisee’s perceptions of Jesus and response to Jesus? | | |

1. After recording Jesus' response to the Pharisees in this third conflict (12:25-29), Matthew records a longer discourse section (12:30-50) where Jesus speaks to the spiritual condition of the Pharisees, in contrast to that of His followers.
2. **WHAT** specific error on the part of the Pharisees in 12:24 occasioned this longer explanation?
3. In Matthew 12:30, Jesus explains that there are only two ways to respond to him. **WHAT** are the two options? What is the implication of each option?
4. **HOW** does Jesus describe the error that the Pharisees made in 12:32? **WHAT** other error is that particular error contrasted with? **WHAT** is the difference between them?
5. **WHAT** does Jesus say the root of such sin is in 12:33-35?
6. To **WHOM** does Jesus compare the Pharisees’ response in 12:41-42? **HOW** does their response compare to those two Old Testament examples?
7. In 12:43-45 Jesus tells a short parable to show the danger of some attitudes towards His ministry.
   1. **HOW** does Jesus describe the state of those who benefit from the immediate effects of His ministry in 12:43-44?
   2. **WHAT** is the danger in 12:44-45 facing such people if their lives remain simply “empty, swept, and put in order”?
   3. **WHO** does Jesus say this warning is directed towards in 12:45?
8. Jesus finishes with a contrasting image in 12:46-50, clarifying those who truly belong to Him.
   1. **WHAT** metaphor does Jesus use to describe those who truly belong to Him?
   2. **WHAT** characterizes those who belong to Jesus in this way?

7. **WHAT** does Jesus warn the Pharisees will come upon them because of how they have responded to Jesus and His ministry in 12:36-37, 41-42, and 45?

8. Based on how Jesus defines His family, would you call yourself His brother or sister? **WHY** or **WHY** not?

***Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story (Part 1)***

1. **“This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah”.** Matthew makes the point in 12:17-21 that Jesus’ ministry at this point happened to fulfill a prophecy given in Isaiah.
2. Read Isaiah 41:8-9, and then Isaiah 42:1-3
   1. Who was this prophecy originally given to?
   2. How does Isaiah 42:1 describe the person who will fulfill this prophecy??
   3. How does Jesus begin to fulfill this prophecy in Matthew 12:15-16?
3. Ephesians 2:11-16 more fully explains how Jesus will be the one in whom the Gentiles hope (Matt. 12:21).
   1. According to Ephesians 2:11-12 what was the state of the Gentiles before Jesus?
   2. According to Ephesians 2:13 and 16 what is their state because of Jesus?
   3. What did Jesus do to accomplish this in Ephesians 2:13-16?
      1. *Stop and think about the great difference being united with Christ makes for you; how might you praise God for bringing you near and giving you hope, you who were once far away because of the dividing wall of hostility that your sin created?*

2. “**How can someone enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man?”** Jesus claims that His ministry by the power of the Holy Spirit is evidence of the arrival and accessibility of the kingdom of God.

1. Read Matthew 12:29.
   1. How does Jesus describe the state of “the strong man” (who we know to be Satan from 12:26)?
   2. Did Jesus need to accomplish this before or after He began freeing people from demon possession?
   3. Skim back over the gospel of Matthew so far. Where was the first mention of Jesus freeing people from their demon possession? (Hint: Matthew 4)
   4. Based on Jesus teaching in Matthew 12:29, Satan was bound before Matthew 4:24. What earlier event in Matthew 4 must have been the binding of Satan?
   5. The facing of Satan’s temptation in the wilderness isn’t the only place where Jesus would triumph over Satan. Read Colossians 2:15.Where does Paul say Jesus' victory took place?
   6. How does Paul describe what happened to the demonic “rulers and authorities” when Jesus died?
2. Read Hebrews 2:14-15, where the writer of Hebrews is encouraging the church in the midst of opposition for the faith. How does he describe what Jesus did to the devil by His death?
   1. What is the encouragement in Hebrews 2:15 for all of God’s people in light of what Jesus has done?
      1. *Stop and consider how you can praise God for the way in which you have been delivered from lifelong slavery.*

3. **“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks”.** In Matthew 12:33-37 Jesus diagnoses the cause of the Pharisees’ rejection of him. It begins in their hearts.

1. The idea that evil originates in our hearts echoes throughout scripture. Jeremiah wrote about this concept to Israelites who were in exile.
   1. Read Jeremiah 4:1-4. According to v. 4, what did the Israelites need to do in order to return to God?]
   2. Read Jeremiah 17:5-10. Why did they need to do this? How does Jeremiah describe the relationship between the hearts of people and the lives they live?
   3. How does Jeremiah describe the state of the human heart in v. 9? What will such hearts receive from God according to vv. 5-6?
2. There is a way that God plans to solve this problem of the human heart and its deceit. Read Jeremiah 24:4-10.
   1. What will God do for those who He allows to return from their exile in Babylon[[14]](#footnote-13) in vv. 4-7?
   2. What will God do to those who do not receive “a heart to know that I am the LORD” in vv. 8-10?
3. How is it that God gives His people a new heart (or circumcises their hearts, to use Jeremiah’s language)? Read Colossians 2:11-15.
   1. How does Paul talk about the circumcision all believers receive in v. 11?
   2. What are the things that believers receive because of the “circumcision made without hands/the circumcision of Christ”?
4. *Which of these benefits have you not considered before? Which ones have you come to appreciate in a new way through your study of Matthew this semester?*

***Reflection: Connect to His Story (Part 2)***

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**Matthew 12:1 - 12:50 (ESV)***LESSON TWELVE*

**12** At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. 2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.” 3 He said to them, “Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: 4 how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? 5 Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? 6 I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. 7 And if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. 8 For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”

9 He went on from there and entered their synagogue. 10 And a man was there with a withered hand. And they asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”—so that they might accuse him. 11 He said to them, “Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? 12 Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” 13 Then he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, healthy like the other. 14 But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.

15 Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all 16 and ordered them not to make him known. 17 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

18 “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen,

my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased.

I will put my Spirit upon him,

and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.

19 He will not quarrel or cry aloud,

nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets;

20 a bruised reed he will not break,

and a smoldering wick he will not quench,

until he brings justice to victory;

21 and in his name the Gentiles will hope.”

22 Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw. 23 And all the people were amazed, and said, “Can this be the Son of David?” 24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons.” 25 Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. 26 And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. 28 But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house. 30 Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. 31 Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. 32 And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

33 “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. 34 You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. 36 I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, 37 for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, “Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.” 39 But he answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. 42 The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

43 “When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finds none. 44 Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when it comes, it finds the house empty, swept, and put in order. 45 Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there, and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So also will it be with this evil generation.”

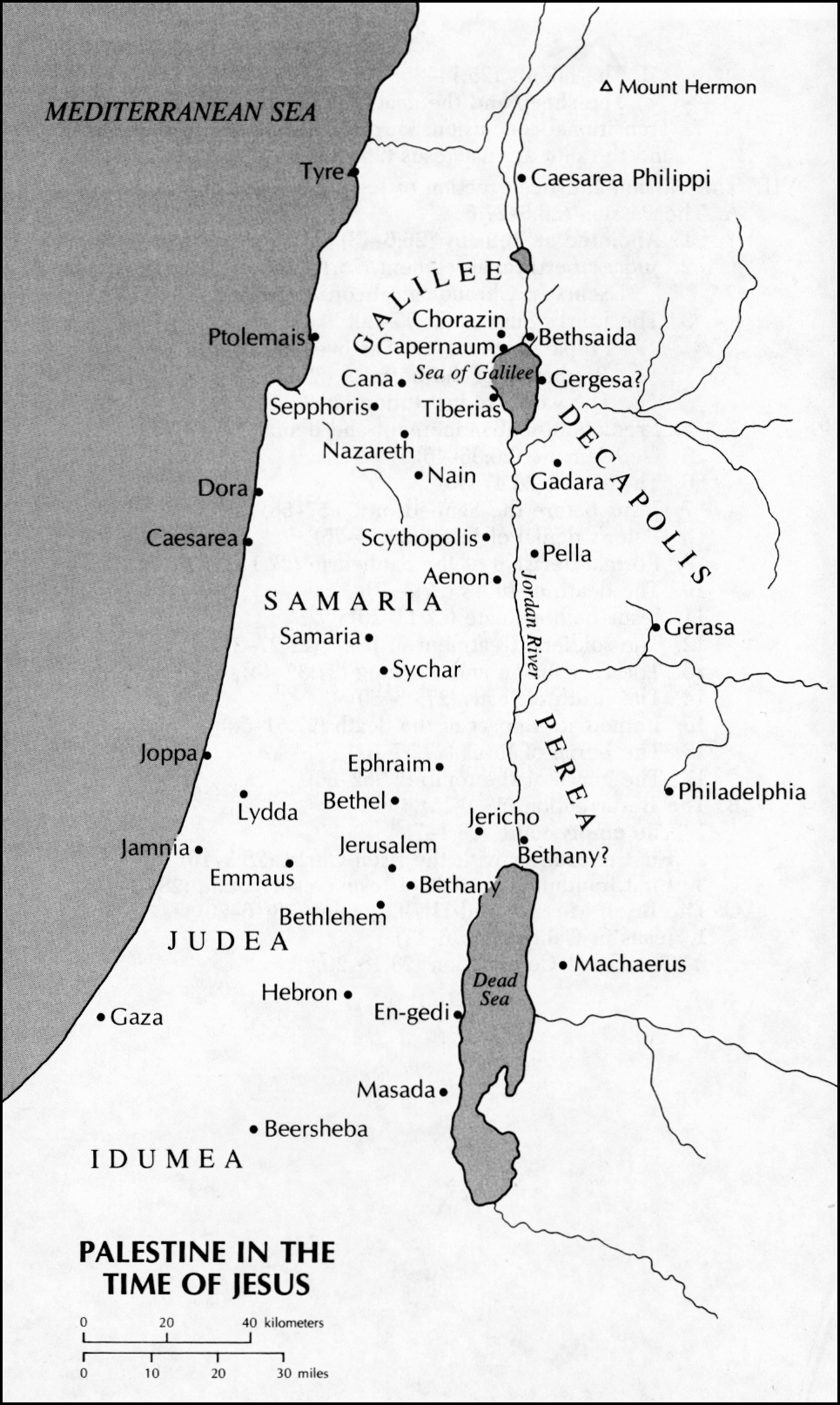
46 While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. 48 But he replied to the man who told him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” 49 And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! 50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

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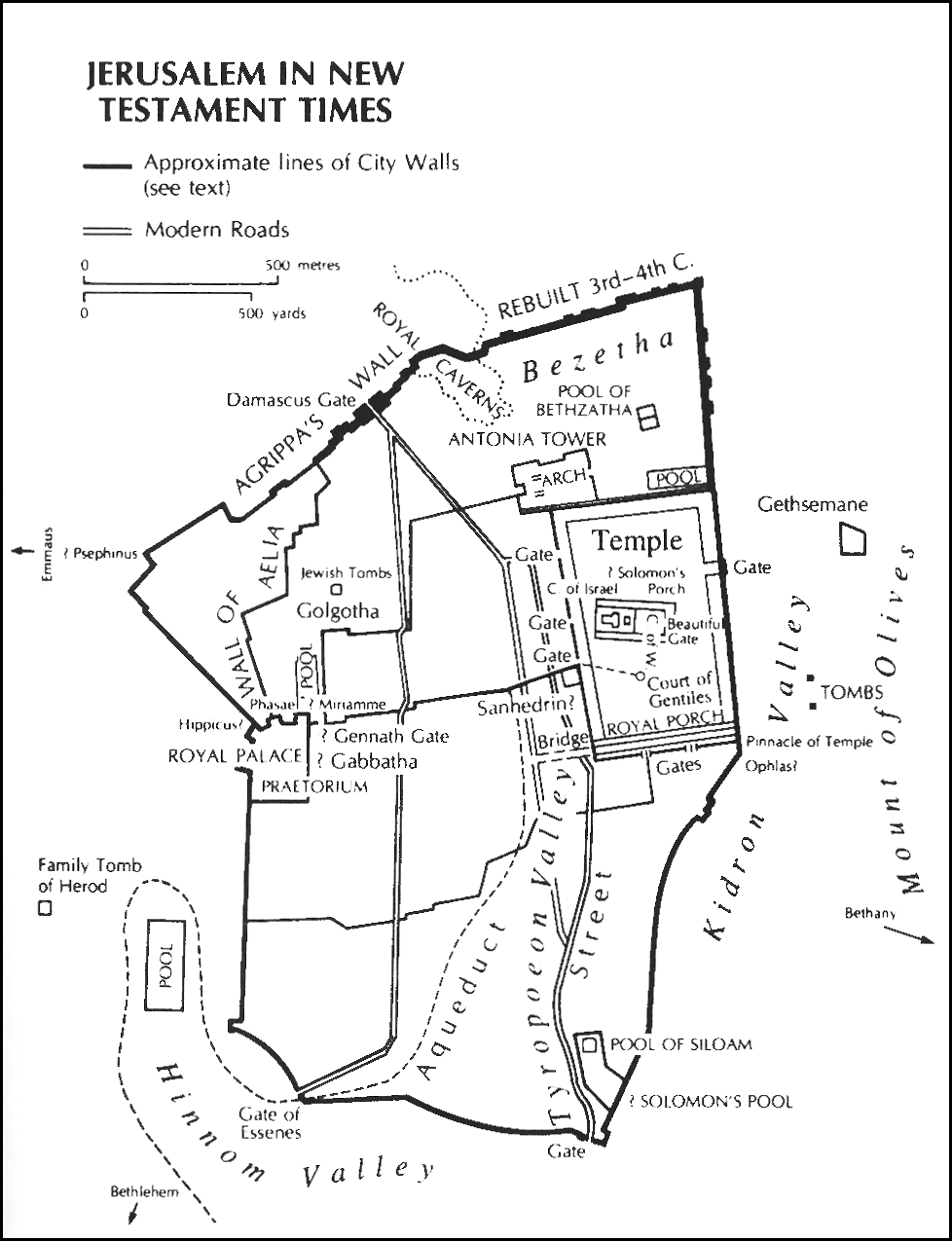
# Appendix | Map & Prayer Requests Log

Maps 130

Group Prayer Requests Log 132



*Figure 1.1 Palestine In The Time of Jesus [Map from DA Carson commentary - page 58 (Expositor’s Bible commentary)]*



*Figure 2.1 Jerusalem in New Testament Times [DA Carson commentary - page 59]*

**WEEK ONE**

Name Prayer Request(s)

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**WEEK TWO**

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**WEEK THREE**

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**WEEK FOUR**

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**WEEK FIVE**

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**WEEK SIX**

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**WEEK SEVEN**

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**WEEK EIGHT**

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**WEEK NINE**

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**WEEK TEN**

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**WEEK ELEVEN**

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**WEEK TWELVE**

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4. Achtemeier, P. J., Harper & Row and Society of Biblical Literature. (1985). In [Harper’s Bible dictionary](https://ref.ly/logosres/hbd?ref=Page.p+1017&off=76&ctx=e+and+a+place+name.+~1+The+Canaanite+daug) (1st ed., p. 1017). San Francisco: Harper & Row. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. As per last week’s lesson, “Christ” means Messiah or Anointed one, and often refers to the king. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. “Ephraim” in 11:3 is one of the tribes of the nation of Israel; it is being used here to represent all the people of Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
7. Rachel was one of the two wives of Jacob, who was renamed Israel. Jacob had twelve sons who became the heads of the 12 tribes of the nation of Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
8. Remember what Matthew wants us to know about Jesus in Matthew 1:1 and Matthew 1:20. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
9. Last week we learned that God often spoke of Israel as his firstborn son (Exodus 4:22, Jeremiah 31:19-20, Hosea 11:1-4). Today we’ll add another dimension to the scriptural witness about God’s son! [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
10. Need help thinking through this? Read John 19:23-27 (what did Jesus do for his mother in the midst of his own physical pain?), Acts 1:12-14 (who was in the upper room with the disciples?) and 1 Corinthians 9:5 (who travels with some apostles?) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
11. *D. A. Carson,* [*“Matthew,”*](https://ref.ly/logosres/ebc08?ref=Bible.Mt6.9&off=3855&ctx=cf.+DNTT%2c+2:648ff.).~+God%E2%80%99s+%E2%80%9Cname%E2%80%9D+is+God) *in The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 170.* [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
12. In Jesus’ day the Pharisees fasted twice a week…probably Monday and Thursday

    D. A. Carson, [“Matthew,”](https://ref.ly/logosres/ebc08?ref=Bible.Mt6.16&off=1059&ctx=ungry+(Isa+58:1%E2%80%937).%0a~In+Jesus%E2%80%99+day+the+Ph) in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
13. Ephraim and Judah were two of twelve sons of Israel. Their names are often used to refer to the entire Israelite nation. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
14. Note: In this text it talks about the “Chaldeans”. This is simply a name for the people who lived in Babylon. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)