

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

### Who is This Jesus and Where Does He Come From? Matthew 1:1–2:23

*“All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet...”* Matthew 1:22

#### Day 1: Read Matthew 1:1–2:23.

1. The formulaic statement “This was to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet” appears five times in this passage. Matthew wants us to know that Jesus is the long awaited Messiah prophesied of in the Old Testament. How is each OT prophecy fulfilled in the life of Jesus?

1:22, 23

2:5, 6

2:14, 15

2:17, 18

2:22, 23

2. The succession of kings in Israel makes up a significant portion of Matthew’s genealogy of Christ. What do you think Matthew wants his readers to know about Jesus? (1: 6-11)

3. There are five women mentioned in Jesus’ genealogy. What do you know about the nationality, reputation, occupation or character of these women? Why would God inspire Matthew to include them in the genealogy of Jesus?

Tamar (Gen. 38)

Rahab (Josh. 2:1-21)

Ruth (Ruth 1:1-22; 2:10-12; 4:13-15)

Bathsheba (Uriah’s wife) (2 Sam. 11)

Mary (Mt. 1:18-25)

#### Days 2 and 3: Read Matthew 1:18–2:18.

4. How does Mary become pregnant? Why is this significant in redemptive history?
5. What might Joseph’s initial reaction have been when he learned that his fiancée, Mary, was pregnant? In spite of these thoughts and feelings, how does Joseph show grace to Mary?

6. There is no other instance in the New Testament in which Jesus is called "Immanuel" (v. 23). What about this title is significant? Consider how sin has affected our access to God. (Isa. 59:1-4, 15b, 16)
  
7. How do the purpose of the Magi's trip (v.2) and their actions towards Jesus (v. 11) foreshadow the future role he will have? (📖\*Phil. 2:6-11)
  
8. Why is Herod (and "all Jerusalem" as well) so "disturbed" (verse 3) by what the Magi say?
  
9. When Herod's plan to kill Jesus is thwarted by the Magi, what does he do to ensure that the "King of the Jews" will never threaten his throne?
  
10. After Herod's death, Jesus leaves Egypt and returns to the land of Israel. What Old Testament event does this parallel? (Gen. 46:3, 4; Deut. 5:1, 6; Hos. 11:1) In what ways?

**Days 4 and 5: Read Matthew 1:1—2:23.**

11. Nazareth as a village was utterly insignificant, and people from the region were often detested. (See, for ex., Jn. 1:45, 46.) How does Jesus' coming from lowly Nazareth fit with the OT prophecies of the Messiah? (Ps. 22:6-8; Isa. 53:3)
  
12. For 400 year prior to the coming of Jesus there had been no prophetic word from God; how does that dramatically change in the first two chapters of Matthew?
  
13. Throughout the Old Testament, God protected the "seed" (the forefathers of Jesus through whom he would come) from Satan's plans to thwart his plan of redemption. How do attempts to destroy the seed and God's sovereign protection of it continue to play out in the first two chapters of Matthew?
  
14. Like our world today, Jesus' world was characterized by political unrest, the schemes of wicked men, merciless killing, and untold heartbreak. In spite of this, what do we know that gives us the assurance that God is still in control and sovereignly at work bringing about his plan of salvation and redemption? What verse or passage in the Bible brings you comfort during troubled times?

\* The 📖 symbol identifies verses for further study.

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

### The Messiah    Matthew 3:1—4:17

*“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”* Matthew 3:17b

#### Day 1: Read Matthew 3:1-12.

1. What is John the Baptist’s message in a nutshell? (v. 2)
  
2. What does “repent” mean? (Ez. 18:23; Acts 3:19) What does John mean when he says, “Produce fruit in keeping with repentance” (v. 8)? (Mt. 12:33-37; Acts 26:20; Eph. 5:8-11)
  
3. John’s preaching is full of fire and brimstone language. How is the warning in his fiery message actually evidence of God’s grace? (Ez. 33:11) \* (Jonah 1:1, 2; 3:4, 5, 10; 4:10, 11)
  
4. In which areas of your life have you seen good fruit recently? Where would you like to see more? Pray, thanking God for growth you have seen and asking him for more growth where you need it.

#### Day 2: Read Matthew 3:13-17.

5. The list of events recorded in all of the Gospels is short—not even Jesus’ birth is found in all four. Yet Jesus’ baptism is narrated or alluded to in every one. Why do you think this event is so important? (1 Sam. 16:1, 12, 13; Jn. 1:29-34)
  
6. The writer Leon Morris notes, “Jesus might well have been up there in front standing with John and calling on sinners to repent.” What is the significance of his placing himself instead among the sinners flocking to John for baptism? (Is. 53:4, 12; Heb. 2:14-17)
  
7. The Holy Spirit’s descent upon Jesus and the Father’s voice from heaven evoke Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah (the Anointed One). Look at the following verses: Ps. 2:7; Is. 42:1.
  - a. What echoes of these prophecies do you hear in verses 16 and 17 of today’s passage?
  
  - b. What do we learn about Jesus and the mission for which he was sent from the following prophecies? (Is. 52:13; 53:4-6, 9-12)

#### Day 3: Read Matthew 4:1-11.

8. Who prompts Jesus to go out into the desert? (v. 1) For what purpose?

\* The  symbol identifies verses for further study.

9. Who is doing the tempting? (vv. 1, 10) What do we know about him? (Gen. 3:1-7; Jn. 8:44)
10. The first two temptations are subtle. What do you think is the problem with the things Satan is asking Jesus to do?
11. The price Satan names in the third temptation—bowing before him in worship—is blatantly evil. But what is wrong even with his offer of “all the kingdoms of the world” (v. 8), to be handed to Jesus on a silver platter? (After all, God says to his son in Ps 2:8: “Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.”) What is Satan deliberately leaving out? (Consider Phil 2:5-11; Rev. 5:9, 12. 📖\* Recall also the Is. 53 passage from Day 2.)

**Day 4: Read Matthew 4:1-11.**

12. The devil’s desire in these temptations is to scuttle the mission of salvation for which Jesus has just been anointed. Commentator Tom Wright makes the following point about our own temptations: “The temptations we all face, day by day and at critical moments of decision and vocation in our lives...have exactly the same point. They are not simply trying to entice us into committing this or that sin. They are trying to distract us, to turn us aside, from the path of servanthood....”

What can we learn from Jesus in today’s passage and elsewhere about how to handle such temptations and struggles? (vv. 4, 7, 10; 16:23; 26:38-44) 📖\* (Jas. 4:7)

13. In response to Satan’s temptations, Jesus quotes passages in Deuteronomy that refer to the Israelites’ wanderings in the desert after their exodus from Egypt. Jesus prevails where the Israelites stumbled. (Deut. 1:26, 27) What encouragement does his victory give us? (Heb. 4:15, 16)

14. What areas of temptation are you currently facing?

What resources has God given you? (1 Cor. 10:13; Heb 2. 17, 18; 1 Jn. 2:1)

How can you apply these verses to these situations right now?

**Day 5: Read Matthew 4:12-17.**

15. A period of perhaps a year has passed between Jesus’ temptation and the events narrated in this passage. The phrase “From that time on” (v. 17) indicates a turning point, the start of something new. What is Jesus’ first message as he begins his public ministry? Why does this sound familiar? (3:1, 2)
16. Matthew wrote for a Jewish audience. But his inclusion of the “Galilee of the Gentiles” prophecy from Isaiah (vv. 15, 16) hints at something unexpected in the Messiah’s mission. This starts right away with the genealogy in chapter 1 and runs through the book. Spot the theme in the following snippets of Matthew’s Gospel: 28:19; 2:1, 2; 4:24; 8: 28 📖\* (12:18-21; 15:21-28)

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The Beginning of Jesus' Public Ministry      Matthew 4:18—5:20

*" ' Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will make you fishers of men.'  
At once they left their nets and followed him." Matthew 4:19-20*

**Day 1: Read Matthew 4:12-25.**

1. After his baptism and time of testing in the desert, Jesus begins his public ministry. What does he do? (vv.12; 17-19; 23, 24)
2. What kinds of people respond to Jesus? How do they respond? (v. 24, 25)
3. Jesus' preaching, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near," (v. 17) is followed by awesome miracles. How are the healings and exorcisms a sign that the king has come and "the kingdom of heaven" has started to arrive? (v. 24)
4. The puppet kings who have ruled over Israel for the last 200 hundred years have been blood-thirsty, oppressive, and cruel. In contrast, what is the rightful king, Jesus, like? (Mt. 2:6; Mt. 9:36)

**Day 2: Read Matthew 4: 18-25.**

5. How do the first four disciples respond to Jesus' call? (vv. 20, 22)
6. Do you remember when you first heard Jesus calling you? How did you respond?
7. What have you given up and left behind to follow Jesus? Was it worth it? Why?
8. Jesus says that his disciples will become "fishers of men." This is a picture of fishing with large nets and hauling in huge catches, not fishing with a rod. How did this come true in Peter's and John's lives? (Acts 2:14, 36-41; 4:1-4)

**Day 3: Read Matthew 5:1-12.**

9. In what is called "The Beatitudes" (i.e., declarations of blessedness), Jesus is giving his disciples a radical new way of living. These are the ethics of the kingdom that go way beyond mere outward obedience to a set of rules. Those who have responded to his preaching and embraced Jesus as king are now called to a radical commitment to him and to an obedience that comes from the heart. What happens to us when we enter the kingdom which enables us to live this new way? (Ez. 36:25-27; Jn. 3:1-8; 2 Cor. 5:17, 18)

10. What kind of people will be a part of the new kingdom? Write beside each one your own definition. List each attribute on the left; "flesh out" what that means on the right.

v.3	poor in spirit	To admit my spiritual poverty; I need God.
v.4		
v.5		
v.6		
v.7		
v.8		
v.9		
v.10		

11. The second half of each beatitude contains a promise. What will Jesus' disciples receive? When? How do these promised blessings compare to the "blessings" we normally want?

**Day 4: Read Matthew 5:11-16.**

12. What images does Jesus use? (vv. 13, 14) What do you think they mean?

13. Jesus is calling his disciples to a radical new lifestyle. The goal, though, is not just our own personal holiness. We are called to be "fishers of men." Look back at The Beatitudes. As we are changed to live them, how do we become "saltier salt" and "brighter light" in the world?

14. (a) What was Israel supposed to be? (Is. 42:6-7; 49:6)

(b) How does Jesus do what Israel failed to do? (Lk. 4:18-21; Jn. 3:16-19; 8:12)

(c) What is our calling now? (v. 14; Eph. 5:8-11; Phil. 2:14-16)

(d) What will be the result? (v.16)

**Day 5: Read Matthew 5:13-20.**

15. In verse 17 Jesus says that he has not come to abolish the Old Testament Law and Prophets but to fulfill them. How is Jesus this promised fulfillment? (Rom. 3:21-26; Heb. 1:1-4)

16. Look back at The Beatitudes. Which beatitude(s) have we seen embodied in Jesus so far in Matthew?

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

Jesus Restores the Heart of the Law Matthew 5:21–6:18

*“You have heard that it was said....But I tell you....”* Matthew 5:38a, 39a

Days 1 and 2: Read Matthew 5:21–48.

1. This passage contrasts the meaning of the Law according to *religious tradition* and the Law according to *Jesus*. Fill in the chart to highlight the differences.

	<i>“You have heard that it was said....”</i>	<i>“But I tell you....”</i>
5:21-26		
5:27-30		
5:31-32		
5:33-37		
5:38-42		
5:43-48		

2. The Jewish religious leaders had taken the “heart” out of the Law by interpreting it in ways that were merely external.
- a. Why did they do this? (Rom. 9:31–10:4)
  
  
  
  - b. What are the ways you do this as well?
3. Jesus raises the bar by interpreting the Law in a way that penetrates to the innermost recesses of the heart. The resulting standard is impossible for his followers to achieve. (Consider verse 48.) Why does Jesus do this? (Rom. 3:19–24) What response do you think Jesus wants his followers (including you) to have to his lofty calling?
4. Look again at the chart. What does column two require of us that column one does not? (Is. 29:13)

Days 3 and 4: Read Matthew 6:1–18.

5. What three areas of religious devotion does Jesus focus on? What do you think are God’s intentions for these practices?

6. What title does Jesus give to people who perform their acts of righteousness before men, in order to be seen by them? (vv.2, 5, 16)  
How do these people make sure they are noticed by others when they do the following:  
Give (v.2):  
Pray (v.5):  
Fast (v.16):
7. What reward do those who practice their righteousness before others receive? What reward do they miss out on?
8. Consider your desire for the praise of men or the approval of others. What makes it so attractive? How does it feel when you don't get it? Why is an empty reward? What do you do to try and get it?
9. Christian teaching often exhorts believers to do things from "pure" motives. This is often understood to mean doing things with no thought of reward or personal gain. On the contrary what does Jesus hold out as motivation? (vv. 4, 6, 18)
10. Are doing things in "secret" and holding out for the Father's reward difficult for you? Why?

**Day 5: Read Matthew 6:9-15.**

11. This prayer of Jesus can be divided into two parts:  
What is the focus of verses 9-10? \_\_\_\_\_ Verses 11-13? \_\_\_\_\_
12. What do you think is the importance of each of the elements in the model prayer of Jesus?
  - a. Our Father in heaven:
  - b. Hallowed be your name:
  - c. Your kingdom come:
  - d. Your will be done:
  - e. Give us today our daily bread:
  - f. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors:
  - g. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one:
13. How does Jesus make clear the importance of forgiving one another? (vv. 14, 15)  
  
What is the motive for forgiving others? (Eph. 4:32) \* (Mt.18:23-34)
14. Think about your prayer life. How does the model given by Jesus encourage or challenge you as you pray?

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## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

Setting Priorities Matthew 6:19–7:29

*“For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds;  
and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”* Matthew 7:8

**Day 1: Read Matthew 6:19-24.**

1 What are the three comparisons made in these verses?

6:19-21

6:22-23

6:24

2. What is heavenly treasure and how do we “store it up”? (Mt. 19:21; 1 Tim. 6:17-19)

What earthly treasures entice you?

3. We are told “No one can serve two masters” (v. 24). How does your choice of a master ultimately affect other choices you make?

Think of one way you will choose to follow your Master today.

**Day 2: Read Matthew 6:25-34.**

4. We are here told to turn away from worry and turn to faith. What examples does Jesus give of God’s care over his creation?

5. What are God’s reasons for caring for us? (vv. 26b, 32)

6. What do the pagans run after? What is the believer to seek?

7. What antidotes does Jesus give for worry in verse 33?

8. In verse 34 Jesus says, “‘Therefore do not worry about tomorrow’ ”.... What does the “therefore” look back to in the passage?

How can knowing these truths serve to alleviate your worries?

What worry can you surrender today?

**Day 3: Read Matthew 7:1-12.**

9. Why should you not judge others? (vv. 1, 2; Rom. 2:1-4)

Who is the true judge? (Ps. 9:7, 8; Heb. 4:12; Jas. 4:12)

10. Having a plank sticking out of your eye is an incredibly absurd picture — yet this is how God views you when you act as a hypocrite. When is it appropriate to help remove the speck from another believer's eye? (v.5; Col. 1:28)

How can you first remove the plank from your own eye? (1 Jn. 1:8, 9)

11. What can we learn about the type of relationship God desires to have with his people from verses 7-11? (Jer. 29:13, Jas. 1:5-7)

What kind of father do these verses depict?

**Day 4: Read Matthew 7:13-23.**

12. Matthew 7:1-5 admonishes us not to judge, but verses 13-23 encourage us to be discerning. What do these verses tell us to be discerning about?
13. A tree is recognized by its fruit. It would seem by what follows in verses 21-23 that the fruit may not always be so easy to identify. How can we be sure that the fruit we bear will be good? (Jn. 15:1-17)

**Day 5: Read Matthew 7:24-28.**

14. Robert Mounce notes that "the purpose of this parable is to warn those who have listened to the sermon (chapters 5-7) that wisdom calls for action." What are we as believers called to do? (v. 24)
15. On a fine day, two houses may appear the same. What does it take to show the difference?

Why does one fall down?

16. Matthew 5-7 is filled with the authoritative teaching of Jesus. What particular section do you find most convicting?

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### Jesus the Miracle Worker    Matthew 8:1–9:13

*“The men were amazed and asked, ‘What kind of man is this?  
Even the winds and the waves obey him!’ ”* Matthew 8:27

#### Day 1: Read Matthew 8:1– 9:13.

1. In Matthew 5-7 Jesus has **taught** with authority (7:28, 29). Now he acts with authority.

	What is the situation?	What does Jesus do?	Result
8:2-4			
8:5-6,13			
8:14,15			
8:16			
8:23-26			
8:28, 30-32			
9:2-7			
9:9			

#### Day 2: Read Matthew 8:1-4.

2. Leprosy is a general term for all kinds of skin rashes and diseases. What was a leper’s life like? (Lev. 13: 45, 46)
3. What amazing thing does Jesus do before he heals the leper? Why do you think he does that?
4. Jesus heals this man, but he still needs to go to the Temple and sacrifice so he can be made ritually clean. What do you need to remember when you feel unclean and unacceptable? (Heb. 9:22; 9:13-14; 10:19-22; Eph. 5: 25-27)

#### Day 3: Read Matthew 8:5-22.

5. How does the Roman centurion “get” who Jesus is, in a way that no one else has so far? (vv. 8-10)
6. In verses 11 and 12, Jesus describes the Great Celebration Banquet that will happen in the Kingdom of Heaven at the end of the age.
- a. What is very surprising and shocking about Jesus’ guest list?
  - b. Jesus is saying that this Roman centurion, an “unclean” Gentile outsider, will share a meal with the Old Testament Patriarchs. What does the centurion have that makes that possible? (v.10; Rom 3:22-24; 28-30)
7. Jesus tenderly heals Peter’s mother-in-law, and then he spends the entire evening healing many others. How do these scenes show us Jesus’ character and heart? How is Jesus fulfilling Isaiah’s prophecy? (v.17)

#### Day 4: Read Matthew 8:18-27.

8. What do the two would-be disciples in verses 18-22 learn about the cost of following Jesus?

9. In verse 20 Jesus refers to himself for the first time as the “Son of Man.” What does this title mean in the Old Testament? (Dan. 7:13-14)

What is the stark contrast between this title of authority and Jesus’ present lifestyle?

10. Jesus rebukes the disciples for having “little faith” (v.26.) The commentator David Turner says, “It is genuine faith but it is limited in its awareness of the power of Jesus.” (*NLT Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: The Gospel of Matthew & The Gospel of Mark*, David L. Turner, Darrell L. Bock p. 132)

- a. What does this miracle teach them about his power?
- b. What does it say about who he is? (Ps. 65:5-8; 107:23-32)

11. Have there been times when you have felt as if God were asleep and unconcerned about you or your storms? How do the following verses remind you of the truth? (Ps. 121; Ps. 139: 7-10; Jn. 14: 16-18)  
📖 Rom. 8: 31-39

**Day 5: Read Matthew 8:28–9:13.**

12. In 8:28-34, we get the feeling that Jesus has stepped into a place where the power of evil is running rampant. What details in the story point to this?
13. While Christians cannot be demon-possessed, how do we make sure that the devil doesn’t “get a foothold” in our lives? (Eph. 4: 22-32) 📖 (Eph.4-17–5:31; 6:10-18)
14. How do the demons react when Jesus shows up in their territory? What do they already know about Jesus and his power that makes them so afraid? 📖 (Rev. 14:9-11: 20:10)
15. Glance again at chapter 9:1-8.
- a. What shocking thing does Jesus say before he heals the paralyzed man?
  - b. Why do the teachers of the law (Jewish religious authority) consider this blasphemous? (Mk. 2:1-7)
  - c. So what is Jesus saying about himself and his calling? (v. 6)
  - d. How will he bring about this forgiveness? (Heb. 9: 13-14; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:19, 20)
16. These chapters have given us an amazing picture of who Jesus is. Commentator N. T. Wright says, “Jesus has authority. You can’t miss it. Authority in his teaching. Authority over diseases at a distance. Authority over the storm, over the demons. Authority to do what normally only God does: to put away sins.” (*Matthew for Everyone*, pp.96-7)
- Jesus uses his authority very differently from the way those in authority over us often use theirs. Review the chart in question one; what do you learn about how Jesus views and treats people? (9:36; 20:25-28.)
17. It has been said that it doesn’t really matter how much faith you have; what really matters is the person in whom you are putting your faith. Look over today’s lesson. Matthew gets up and follows Jesus; what have we seen in this passage that makes you get up and follow Jesus?

\* The 📖 symbol identifies verses for further study.

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

### Jesus Exercises His Authority    Matthew 9:14–10:20

*“Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness...He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.” Matthew 9:35; 10:1*

#### Day 1: Read Matthew 9:14-17.

1. The traditional expectation was that a rabbi and his followers would practice fasting. Why, then, don't Jesus and his disciples fast?
  
2. What is the significance of Jesus' likening himself to the bridegroom? (Hos. 2:16-20; Jn. 3:27-29; Rev. 19:6-9; 21:1-3) (📖\* Mt. 22:1-14; 25:1-13; Eph. 5:23-32)
  
3. What are the two illustrations in verses 16 and 17 that Jesus uses to describe the relationship between the existing Jewish system and Jesus' new kingdom? What is Jesus saying about his new kingdom?

#### Day 2 and 3: Read Matthew 9:18-38.

4. What essential element is present at each of the miracles in this passage? (vv. 18, 28, 29) (📖\* Contrast 13:58.)
  
5. In Jewish society, strict codes existed concerning what could and could not be touched. At the top of the “do not touch” list were menstruating women and dead people; touching them rendered a person “unclean” and required a course of ritual cleansing.
  - a. How does Jesus approach the “do not touch” regulations? (vv. 20, 21, 25)
  
  - b. When Jesus touches the woman and dead girl, he does not become unclean; instead, they become clean. How does this illustrate what happens to us spiritually? (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24)
  
6. The two blind men following Jesus call out for mercy and address him as the “Son of David” (v.27). What associations would these cries have called up in the minds of those who were listening? (2 Sam. 7:8, 11b-14, 16; Lk. 1:32, 33)
  
7. After healing the blind men, Jesus casts out a demon from a mute man and restores his ability to speak. What reason do the Pharisees come up with to explain the power of Jesus? What logical explanation are they unwilling to entertain, let alone embrace? Why?

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8. As Jesus goes through the towns and villages people flock to him in droves. How does Jesus respond to them? (v. 36a) Why does he respond this way? (v. 36b)
  
9. Because “the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few” (v. 37), Jesus exhorts his disciples to pray and then sends them out into the “harvest field” (v. 38). Ask the Lord to open your eyes to your harvest field. Then purpose to pray for those people he places on your heart or in your path, and look for tangible ways to reach out to them. (Jn. 4:34-36)

**Day 4: Read Matthew 10:1-20.**

10. Jesus decides that it is time for his disciples to have some on-the-job training.
  - a. With what resources does Jesus provide them? (vv. 1, 20)
  
  - b. To whom are they to minister? (vv. 5, 6)
  
  - c. What are they to do on their mission? (vv. 7, 8)
  
11. What reasons do you think Jesus has for telling the disciples to “pack lightly”? (vv. 9, 10)
  
12. What does Jesus mean when he tells his disciples “Freely you have received, freely give” (v. 8b)? How could this serve as a paradigm [pattern] for your Christian life?

**Day 5: Read Matthew 10:1-20.**

13. If God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with fire from heaven because of their gross immorality and grievous sin (Gen. 18:20; 19:24-28), why will judgment be more severe for those who do not receive the disciples nor heed their words? (10:40)
  
14. Picture what it would be like to be a sheep surrounded by a pack of snarling wolves. (v. 16)
  - a. Why would Jesus use this word picture?
  
  - b. What “wolves” can the disciples expect to encounter?
  
  - c. How are the disciples to respond to these wolves? (vv. 16b, 19, 20)
  
15. Jesus instructs his disciples to go only to the Jews. How then will God’s promise to bless all nations be accomplished in the process? (v. 18)

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### Responding to Jesus     Matthew 10:21–11:30

*“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”* Matthew 11:15, ESV

**Day 1: Review Matthew 10:1-20. Read Matthew 10:21-42.**

1. Jesus paints a sobering picture of the opposition and hardship that his disciples can expect.
  - a. What promise does he make in verse 22 that offers a glimmer of encouragement?
  - b. Jesus then exhorts his disciples three times not to be afraid (vv. 26, 28, 31). What reasons does he give not to be afraid?
2. How does the fear of God differ from the fear of other people? Why is one kind of fear appropriate and the other not? (Isa. 8:11-13)
3. Most of us are not threatened with death or imprisonment for our faith. What does “disowning” (v. 33) Jesus look like for you? How can you “acknowledge” (v. 33) him instead? Pray.

**Day 2: Read Matthew 11:1-6.**

4. What does John the Baptist ask Jesus?
5. Why do you think John is having doubts about whether Jesus is, in fact, the Messiah? Consider the following:
  - a. Mt. 3:11, 12 versus, for example, 5:3-10; 9:35, 36
  - b. Mt. 9:14
  - c. Mt. 11:2; 14:3-5
6. How does Jesus’ response demonstrate that he is the Messiah?
  - a. Compare verse 5 with the following prophecies about Jesus: Isa. 35:5, 6; 61:1. (Hint: remember Matthew’s great interest in the way Jesus fulfills Scripture.)
  - b. Consider Acts 2:22 in light of Jesus’ answer and his ministry so far.
7. It may be a bit disconcerting for us that John the Baptist, whose entire life was devoted to preparing the way for Jesus, felt doubts about him—yet we may also be encouraged to realize that even such a man of faith experienced doubt. What can we do when we find ourselves beset by doubt? (Consider John’s example and Mk. 9:23, 24; Heb. 3:12-14.)

**Day 3: Read Matthew 11:7-19.**

8. What remarkable things does Jesus say about John the Baptist? (vv. 9-11a)
9. Jesus calls John “the Elijah who was to come” (v. 14)—a prophet greater than Elijah of the Old Testament. What does this tell us about John and his mission? (Mal. 3:1; Lk. 1:13-17; Jn. 1:6-9)
10. And yet—who is greater than John? (v. 11) Why? (Mt. 13:16, 17; 1 Pet. 1:10-12)

**Day 4: Read Matthew 11:20-30.**

11. The Old Testament records the destruction of Sodom and prophesies the punishment of Tyre and Sidon). Why is the woe Jesus pronounces upon Korazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum even greater? (vv. 21, 23; 12:41, 42; Lk. 12:47, 48)
12. How does Jesus describe himself in verse 29?
13. How does coming to Jesus, and being yoked to him, and learning from him, give us true freedom and rest?
15. In what other things besides Jesus do you sometimes seek “rest for your soul”? (v. 29)

**Day 5: Review Matthew 10:21–11:30.**

16. Throughout this passage Jesus is making extraordinary claims about himself—some of them clear, but more of them veiled. Examine the following to see the fuller picture.
  - a. What claims does Jesus make in 11:27?
  - b. The OT prophets pointed the people to God. To whom is Jesus constantly pointing people? (vv. 10:22, 24, 32-34, 37-40, 42; 11:6, 27-30)
  - c. John the Baptist is the messenger/prophet promised in Malachi 3:1 and 4:5; for whom is the messenger/prophet in Malachi preparing the way? Who then, is the fulfillment of these prophecies?
17. Write a prayer of worship and response to what you have learned this week.

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

### One Greater is Here    Matthew 12:1-50

*“ ‘One greater than the temple... Jonah ... [and] Solomon is here.’ ”* Matthew 12:6, 41, 42

**Day 1: Read Matthew 12:1-14.** (📖\* 1 Samuel 21:1-6)

1. Observing the Sabbath is part of the Ten Commandments. What was the purpose of the Sabbath? (Ex. 20:8-11; 23:10-12)
2. What do we learn about the Sabbath from the response by Jesus to the criticism the Pharisees make in verse 2? (vv. 3-8)

What more do we learn about the Sabbath from his response to the Pharisees' question in verse 10? (vv. 11-13) (📖\* Col. 2:16, 17)

3. Thus far in Matthew we've seen the religious rulers accuse Jesus of blasphemy (9:3) and attribute his power to Satan (9:34) and plot to kill him (v.14). In your own words describe the Pharisees you see in *this* passage. Are there ways you are tempted to be like them?

**Day 2: Read Matthew 12:15-21.**

4. Matthew quotes a Messianic prophecy from Isaiah in verses 18-21. Of what previous event in Matthew does verse 18 remind you? (Mt. 3:16, 17) We've seen what the Pharisees think of Jesus; what does this verse of Isaiah's prophecy say about what God the Father thinks of him? (v. 18)

Why is this important for Jesus to know? (📖\* Mt. 17:5; 1 Pet. 2:4; 2 Pet. 1:17)

5. Consider what the following verses say about Jesus and the Father's love for us. (Jn. 15:9a; 17:20-23) (📖\* John 13:1b; 1 John 3:16) How does knowing this change the way you live and think about yourself and others?
6. What more do we learn about Jesus from the rest of Isaiah's prophecy?

**Day 3: Read Matthew 12:22-37.**

7. Jesus heals the blind, mute, demon-possessed man. Contrast the opinion of the people with the judgment of the Pharisees towards Jesus following this miracle. (vv. 23, 24)
8. How does Jesus show the absurdity of the Pharisees' position? (vv. 25-29)

\* The 📖 symbol identifies verses for further study.

9. Jesus does not mince words when he addresses the Pharisees. What judgments and warnings does he bring against them? (vv. 30-37)
10. Jesus is concerned about more than correcting the error of just the Pharisees. Look at verses 32 and 36; what else is he concerned about?

**Day 4: Read Matthew 12:38-45.**

11. What do the Pharisees and teachers of the Law tell Jesus they want to see? What have they already seen in this chapter alone? (vv. 13, 22)
12. What sign does Jesus say they will see, even though he declares them to be “A wicked and adulterous generation” (v.39)? To what future event is this sign pointing? (v. 40; Mt. 16:21)
13. What is an important purpose (which the Pharisees have missed) of the miracles Jesus performs? (Jn. 10:24, 25; 20:30, 31)  
(📖\* Consider how Jesus dealt with John’s doubt about who he was in Mt. 11:2-5.)
14. Verses 41-42 paint an interesting picture of the Judgment. Why will “this generation” be condemned? What hope is there for us? (Acts 2:36-39) (📖\* Lk. 13:1-5)

**Day 5: Skim Matthew 12:1-45.**

15. List the numerous titles and descriptions of Jesus from this one chapter alone.

Verse	Description
6	<i>He is greater than the temple</i>
8	
18	
21	
23	
41	
42	

16. Read verses 46-50. Commentator D. A. Carson says, “We do not make ourselves Jesus’ close relatives by doing the will of his heavenly Father. Rather, doing the Father’s will *identifies* us as his mother and sisters and brothers.” (*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, & Luke, Volume 8*, p. 300)

If this is true, what enables us to do the Father’s will? (Phil. 2:12-13; Heb. 13:20-21)

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

### The Parables of the Kingdom    Matthew 13:1-58

*" ... 'The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you....' " Mt. 13:11a*

**Day 1: Read Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23.**

1. Jesus explains aspects of the kingdom of heaven through parables. The first one in this section is the parable of the sower. Fill out the table below.

	Types of soil	Condition of soil	What happens to the seed?
v. 4			
v. 5, 6			
v. 7			
v. 8			

2. Jesus interprets this parable in verses 18-23. What explanations does he make about the following?

the seed

the lack of productivity of the first three soils

the fruit of the good soil

the farmer

**Day 2: Read Matthew 13:10-17; 34-36.**

3. The parable of the sower helps the disciples (and us) to understand better why many people refuse to embrace the message of the kingdom that Jesus proclaims.

Why do some people reject the message? (vv. 11, 14, 15a; 2 Cor. 4:4)

What does the parable also say will prevent faith from growing and flourishing in some people? (vv. 20-22)

4. What wonderful gift has been given to the disciples and to us? (vv. 11, 16, 17, 23)
5. The secrets of the kingdom (v. 11) are being slowly revealed to the disciples. What is a central truth that they (and we) must understand? (Mt. 3:16, 17; 16:16, 17) Do you believe this? If not, pray and ask Jesus to open your eyes.
6. On a scale of 1-10, how much did you understand when you first became a believer? Where are you now? What has the Lord used in your life to increase your understanding?

**Day 3: Read Matthew 13:24-30; 36-50.**

7. The parable of the weeds and the parable of the net describe a cosmic battle between two opposing forces. What are they? (vv. 24-28; 48, 49)
  - a. Who are the two leaders and the people who follow them? (vv. 37-39)
  - b. What is the destiny of the weeds/bad fish? (vv. 30, 40-42, 48-50)
  - c. What is the destiny of the good seed/fish? (vv. 30, 43, 48, 49)
8. The common belief during the Jesus' time was that when the Messiah came he would immediately bring the present evil age to an end and inaugurate the new age of righteousness. How do these parables show that God has a different plan?

**Day 4: Read Matthew 13:31-33, 44, 45.**

9. The mustard seed and the tiny grains of yeast seem humble and insignificant, but over time they make a huge impact. How is Jesus once again correcting the disciples' wrong expectations about the nature of the kingdom?
10. We are now living in the time between Jesus' first coming to earth to proclaim the message of the kingdom, and his second and final coming, when he will judge the earth and usher in the fulfillment of the kingdom promises. This is called the "already, not yet". How do these two parables give us hope, as we seek to preach the kingdom and make a difference to this world?
11. To what is the kingdom likened? (vv. 44-46)

What did it cost to purchase these things?

12. What are some of the great treasures of the kingdom that you as a believer now possess?

Which one is particularly meaningful to you? Why? (Rom. 5:1-11, 6:23; Eph. 1:3-8)

**Day 5: Read Matthew 13:53-58.**

13. How does his hometown of Nazareth receive Jesus? Why do you think they react this way?
14. How does the parable of the sower help explain their reaction? (13:18-22)
15. There was some fertile soil in Nazareth. How do we know this? (Acts 1:14, Gal. 1:19)

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

### The Disciples Learn More about Themselves and Jesus Matthew 14

*"Truly you are the Son of God". Matthew 14:33b*

**Day 1: Read Matthew 14:1-12.**

1. Why does Herod arrest, bind and behead John?
  
2. What contrasts can you find between John and Herod in this passage?
  
3. In what ways do the lives of John and Jesus follow the pattern of God's prophets throughout Israel's history? (2 Chr. 24: 20-22; Mt. 14:10; 23:37; Jn. 19:17, 18, 30) (📖\* Heb 11:32-37)
  
4. Matthew's readers, in the early church, are facing hardship and persecution. Why would these details about John's death be important and somewhat encouraging to them? (Mt. 5:11-12; 10:17-28; Phil. 1:29)

What does it mean for us today? (1 Pet. 4:12-16-19)

**Days 2 and 3: Read Matthew 14:13-21.**

5. Jesus, understandably, wants to spend some time alone after receiving the sad news about John's death. What does Jesus understand about himself that makes it possible for him to give up his own desire for some down time and focus on the crowd? (Mt. 12:18; Mt. 20:28; Jn. 6:38)
  
6. How do you respond when your agenda is changed or you feel pressed by the needs of those around you? What understanding do you need to respond in a godly way to these pressures? (2 Cor. 9:8; 12:9, 10)
  
7. What do we learn about Jesus as we see him respond, interact and care for the crowd?
  
8. How would you describe the resources the disciples brought to Jesus to feed five thousand people?

What words would you use to describe the results of what Jesus did with these resources?

\* The 📖 symbol identifies verses for further study.

9. Jesus uses the circumstances of daily life as a teaching opportunity for his disciples. What pattern does Jesus model for meeting needs with seemingly inadequate resources? (vv. 18, 19)
  
10. How can you apply this pattern to a situation in your life where you feel like you have inadequate resources?

**Days 4 and 5: Read Matthew 14:22-36.**

11. What words would you use to describe the scene the disciples found themselves in as Jesus approaches them walking on the lake?
  
12. In verse 28, Peter's fear is transformed into courage. In verse 30 Peter's courage reverts to fear. Since the fierceness of the storm and the presence of Jesus remain constant, what explains the change in Peter's response?
  
13. What does Jesus want his disciples (and us) to learn about who he is and the resources he has at his disposal? What difference does this make when we are afraid in the midst of our storms?
  
14. This is the second time the disciples have seen Jesus still a storm. What is their response the first time? What is their response the second time? How does the difference in their responses show that their understanding of who Jesus is continues to deepen? (Mt. 8:27; 14:33)
  
15. Compare the response of the people of Gennesaret to the people of Nazareth. How do their responses reflect their different understanding of who Jesus is? (14:36; 13:54-58)
  
16. Jesus' provision of food for five thousand people, his walking on water and his healing of the people of Gennesaret have all added to our understanding of who he is. How does this change the way you respond to him and to others?

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

### Jesus Moves Toward the Gentiles    Matthew 15:1–16:12

*“But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart....”* Matthew 15:18a

#### Day 1: Read Matthew 15:1-9.

1. The teachers and the Pharisees are teaming up together to try to trap Jesus in what they see as his failure to be a “good” rabbi. These two groups are not usually united in anything. What might be their reason for coming together now to accuse Jesus?
  
2. The teachers and the Pharisees accuse the disciples of breaking the tradition of the elders (vv. 1, 2), a body of rules and regulations added by man after the original law was given (v. 9). Jesus replies to them in true rabbinical fashion, with a question. What issue is he trying to get at? (v. 3)
  
3. In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus uses the word “hypocrite” twelve times. A hypocrite can be thought of as a play actor. Earlier in this book, (6:2, 5, 16), Jesus refers to giving, praying and fasting when calling the Jews hypocrites. What makes him call them hypocrites now? (15:8) How have his criticisms escalated?
  
4. When Jesus refers to Isaiah 29:13 (15:8, 9) what is the hypocrisy that Jesus points out? What is it that Jesus truly desires? (Jn. 4: 23, 24)

#### Day 2: Read Matthew 15:10-20.

5. Jesus uses the confrontation by the teachers as a teaching opportunity. What are some evidences of an unclean heart? (vv. 18-20)
  
6. People normally blame their situations for their sinful reactions. Where does Jesus say these reactions actually come from?
  
7. How can you hope to have any good come from your sinful heart? (Ezek.36:25-29a; 1 Cor. 6:9-11)
  
8. Jesus calls the Pharisees and teachers blind guides. How is Jesus a different type of guide? (Isa. 42:16; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 14:6)

#### Day 3: Read Matthew 15:21-28.

9. How would you describe this woman?

10. Jesus' response to this Gentile woman seems uncharacteristic. What could be the reason for Jesus' behavior?

What do you think Jesus is referring to when he speaks of "the children's bread" and "their dogs" (v. 26)?

11. How do the statements of the Canaanite woman reflect her understanding of who Jesus really is?
12. Contrast the disciples' response to Jesus' teaching in verses 15 and 16 with the woman's response to Jesus in verse 27. For what is she commended?

**Day 4: Read Matthew 15:29-39.**

13. We find Jesus once again on a mountainside working many miracles. What effect do these miracles have on the crowds? (v. 31) How do they point to Jesus' divinity? (Ps. 72:18, 19; Isa. 35:3-6)
14. Jesus fed a crowd of 5,000 (14:13-21) and now he feeds a crowd of 4,000. Why? (14:14; 15:32)
15. How does Jesus' response to the disciples (v. 34a) demonstrate his patience and love for them?

How have you seen Jesus' compassion, love and patience manifested in your life recently? How can you praise him?

**Day 5: Read Matthew 16:1-12.**

16. Will they never give it a rest! Even after all Jesus has done, the Pharisees and Sadducees now come asking for a sign from heaven.
- What is the sign that Jesus says will be shown to them?
  - How does Jonah's experience point to the death and resurrection of Jesus? (Jonah 1:17; 2:1-6, 10; Mt. 12:39-41)
17. In the New Testament yeast is almost always a symbol of evil and corruption.
- What effect does a little bit of yeast have on dough?
  - Why do you think Jesus warns his disciples to be "on guard against the yeast of the Pharisees" (v. 11)?
  - Think of a time when you had a distorted understanding of God's truth. How did he rescue you from that? What effect did the change in your thinking have on your relationship with God and others?

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

### Jesus Continues to Reveal Himself to His Disciples    Matthew 16:13–17:27

*“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* Matthew 16:16

**Day 1: Read Matthew 16:13-20.**

1. The crowds believed that Jesus was a prophet, but Peter identifies him as the Messiah, the long-awaited King of Israel. Why would this confession be radical and risky (consider what the ramifications might be politically, religiously and personally)? (Mt. 2:1-3, 16; Mt. 10:16-25; Mk. 14:61b-64)
  
2. While Jesus confirms Peter’s confession, why does he warn his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ? (Mt. 17:9; Mk. 1: 40-45; Jn. 6:14, 15)
  
3. Look again at verses 18 and 19. “...the most natural reading of the wordplay is to see that Jesus points to Peter as one who will play a foundational role in the establishment of his church.”  
(Wilkins, Michael J. *The NIV Application Commentary: Matthew*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2004, p. 564)

How does Ephesians 2:19-22 help us understand this passage more fully?

4. How does this teaching encourage you as you think about the church with both its strengths and weaknesses?

**Day 2: Read Matthew 16:13-28.**

5. Why do you think Jesus chooses this time to explain to his disciples about his suffering and death (v. 21)?
  
6. Why does Peter rebuke Jesus? Why does Jesus react so strongly to Peter’s rebuke?
  
7. What does Peter come to understand later on that was unclear to him at this moment? (Acts 2:22-36)
  
8. Jesus makes a distinction between minding the “things of God” and minding the “things of men” (v. 23). Contrast these in the chart below. Focus on verses 21-28.

“Things of God”	“Things of Men”

9. What conviction or encouragement can you draw from this contrast?

**Day 3: Read Matthew 17:1-13.**

10. What dramatic change in Christ's appearance do Peter, James and John witness? What does this reveal about Jesus? (Heb. 1:1-3)

11. In the midst of Peter's "bright idea" to give equal honor to Jesus, Moses and Elijah by building them booths, he is interrupted by the voice of God the Father.

a. What does the Father say about the Son? (v. 5a)

b. What does the Father command? (v. 5b)

c. What is the disciples' response? (v. 6)

d. How does Jesus respond to the terror of his disciples? (v. 7)

**Days 4 and 5: Read Matthew 17:14-27.**

12. Jesus had given his disciples the authority to drive out evil spirits (10:1); why were they unable to drive out this demon?

13. Even though our faith is often "little" like the disciples' what encouragement does Jesus give? (v. 20)

14. This isn't the first time Jesus has talked about his suffering and death. (vv. 22,23)

Compare the disciples' response in v. 23b with their earlier responses. (vv.16:22; 17:13)

What reason for hope have they completely missed? (Mt. 16:21b; 1 Cor. 15:17-20a)

15. In what ways do you see Jesus being gracious in his interactions with Peter about the two-drachma tax?

16. Look back over this week's passage. Consider the four interactions with Peter in which Jesus reveals who he is and what he has come to do. How does this encourage you?

*SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

Humility, Reconciliation, Forgiveness Matthew 18:1–19:15

*"In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost."*  
Matthew 18:14

**Day 1: Read Matthew 18:1-14; 19:13-15.**

1. Children in those days had no status, no power, no greatness, and no voice, yet Jesus says that "the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (19:14). What do you think Jesus means when he says we must become like them (18:3)?
  
2. Between Jesus' gentle images of little children and sheep comes some pretty harsh language. In verses 8 and 9 Jesus certainly isn't advocating the mutilation of our bodies, but he is exhorting us figuratively to cut things out of our lives that lead us into sin. Is there anything in your life that causes you to sin? Consider in prayer how Jesus might "cut it off" (v. 8) or "gouge it out" (v.9).

**Day 2: Read Matthew 18:10-14.**

3. The image of the shepherd and his sheep goes back to the Old Testament. Read Ezekiel 34:1-16.
  - a. What do bad shepherds, or leaders, look like? (Ezek. 34:2-6)
  
  - b. What does the LORD promise his people, who have suffered under such bad shepherds? (Ezek. 34:10-12)
  
  - c. Jesus is the "Chief Shepherd" (1 Pet. 5:4) who brings the ultimate fulfillment of God's promise. How do we know that this shepherd, like the one in today's passage, takes the welfare of his flock very seriously indeed? (Mt. 18:6, 12-14; Jn. 10:11-14; Ezek. 34:11-16)
  
4. In 1 Peter 5:2 Peter exhorts the elders of the church, "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care." What responsibility do you think we, as members of Christ's church, have in ensuring that "[none] of these little ones should be lost" (v. 14; Heb. 3:12, 13; 1 Thess. 5:14)?
  
5. How does Jesus' picture of the searching (and finding) shepherd encourage you as you consider your own wandering heart, or the hearts of your children or other loved ones?

**Day 3: Read Matthew 18:15-20.**

6. What is the situation in verse 15a? Describe the model Jesus gives for handling such a situation.
  
7. Consider this passage in light of Jesus' parable of the sheep. What is the purpose here of confronting a believer who has sinned? (Jas. 5:19, 20)

8. How should you prepare before setting out to speak to a brother or sister who has sinned? (Mt. 7:3-5; Gal. 6:1, 2; Jas. 1:5)

9. What promise does Jesus make in verse 20?

This promise comes between the teaching about restoration and reconciliation, and the next passage on forgiveness and mercy. Why would this promise be especially powerful in these situations?

**Day 4: Read Matthew 18:21-35.**

10. Rabbis taught that a person could be forgiven three times, so Peter's suggestion of seven times probably seemed quite generous to him. What do Jesus' response and parable show us is really the right answer to Peter's question? (1 Cor. 13:4, 5; Eph. 4:32)

11. The first servant owes the master a fantastic amount of money—at least several million dollars. The servant's plea for a chance to pay it all back is absurd.

How does the master's action in verse 27 exceed even the servant's wildly unrealistic request?

How does this unlooked-for action reflect God's treatment of you in Christ? (Col. 2:13, 14)

12. The sum owed by the second servant is a real debt, but nothing in comparison to the first servant. What does a comparison of these two debts tell us about God's forgiveness of us, and our forgiveness of others?

13. Who comes before the master in distress to tell him what has taken place? Why?

14. How does Jesus sum up the application of this parable? (v. 35)

**Day 5: Read Matthew 19:1-12.**

15. Jesus avoids the Pharisees' intended trap by focusing on the Creator's original intent for marriage. What is God's intent for marriage?

16. What does the disciples' reaction tell you about where Jesus is setting the bar for marriage?

17. In this week's passage Jesus teaches a lot about how his followers are to relate to one another. Take a moment to pray about a relationship in which you might need to forgive someone, to ask forgiveness of someone, to pursue someone who has wandered—or all of the above.

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

### Greatness and the Kingdom of Heaven    Matthew 19:16–20:34

*“But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.”* Matthew 19:30

**Day 1: Read Matthew 19:16–24.**

1. What does the rich young man want and how does he think he'll get it? (v. 16)
  
2. What is Jesus' initial response to the rich man's question? (v. 17)

Jesus knows that it is impossible for anyone to get eternal life by obeying the commandments, and he's trying to get the rich young man to see this. Why is it impossible? (v. 26, Rom. 3:10-12, 20-24)

3. The rich young man says he has kept all the laws Jesus listed. What does the man's next question reveal he's lacking? (v. 20b)

**Day 2: Read Matthew 19:16–20:16.**

4. In verse 21, “Jesus takes the young man to the inner place where his values are formed (his heart) and challenges him to see what is his most cherished value—in essence, the ruling god of his life.”  
(Wilkins, Michael J. *The NIV Application Commentary: Matthew*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2004, p. 649)
  - a. What does the young man cherish that keeps him from following Jesus? (vv. 21, 22)  
(📖\* Jonah 2:8)
  
  - b. What, if anything, do you cherish that keeps you from following Jesus?

5. Read Phil. 3:4b-11. What does Paul understand that this man doesn't?

6. What perspective does Jesus give the disciples on the sacrifices they have made to follow him?  
(vv. 28-30) (📖\* 2 Cor. 4:17-18)

What are the disciples concerned with in verses 18:1, 19:27, 20:21?

How is Jesus addressing their way of thinking in verse 30 and in the parable that follows?

**Day 3: Read Matthew 20:1-16.**

7. The landowner hires men to work 12, 9, 6, 3 and 1 hour(s) in his vineyard. What are the terms of employment for each set of workers? (vv. 2, 4, 5, 7)

\* The 📖 symbol identifies verses for further study.

8. What do we learn about the attitude of the first set of workmen from verses 10-15?

What attitudes might you have that are similar to the workmen?  
(📖\* Consider Peter in 19:27 and Jn. 21:18-22.)

9. What do we learn about the landowner in the parable?

**Day 4: Read Matthew 20:17-28.**

10. What grim realities is Jesus aware of as he goes up to Jerusalem? What glorious reality?

How should this give the disciples hope?

How can the resurrection give you hope? (1 Cor. 15:17-22, 42-44)

11. What is the mother of James and John asking of Jesus?

Why do you think the other disciples are indignant?

12. "The 'cup' throughout Scripture refers figuratively to one's divinely appointed destiny, whether it was one of blessing and salvation (Ps. 16:5; 116:13) or of wrath and disaster (Is. 51:17; Jer. 25:15-29)." (Wilkins, p. 668)

What is the cup Jesus is referring to and what was it like for him to drink? (18, 19, 28; Mt. 26:38-45)

**Day 5: Read Matthew 20:20-34.**

13. In what way will James and John drink from Jesus' cup? (Acts 12:1, 2; Rev. 1:9)  
(📖\* Jn. 15:18-21; Acts 5:40-41)

14. How does Jesus teach the disciples about true greatness in verses 25-28?

15. How and to whom do the blind men appeal?

Contrast the crowds' response to them with Jesus' response.

16. Contrast the result of Jesus' interactions with the rich young man and the blind men.

What have you learned about the kingdom from this week's lesson that will radically change how you think or live?

***SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*****The Son of David Comes to Jerusalem****Matthew 21:1-46**

*"Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"* Matthew 21:5

**Day 1: Read Matthew 21.**

1. Up until now Jesus and his disciples have been in northern Israel. Now he has made a significant shift to the south, to Jerusalem.

Why? (Mt. 26:17)

Where do they stay? (v. 17) With whom? (Jn. 12:1-3)

2. Read Psalm 118:1-29.

Several times in this week's chapter Psalm 118 is quoted. This is a Psalm that is traditionally sung during the Passover celebrations. Why might this be? (\* To learn about Passover read Ex.15:1-21.)

**Day 2: Read Matthew 21:1-11.**

3. The pilgrims on the road with Jesus are caught up in the excitement of the moment. What conclusions do they jump to when they see Jesus riding the colt? (Zech. 9: 9-10; 1 Ki. 1:32-35; Jer. 23:5, 6)

4. "A conquering king parades triumphantly into a city with all the trappings of glory and power."  
(Turner, David L. and Bock, Darrell L. *Matthew, Mark*: Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House, 2006, p. 267)

What aspects of this 'Triumphal Entry' indicate that Jesus is a very different kind of king than what the crowds expect?

5. Jesus has told the disciples what to expect when they finally come to Jerusalem. What is going to happen? (16:21; 20:17-19) How do the crowds' expectations clash with what Jesus has told his disciples will happen in Jerusalem?

What kind of "coronation" awaits Jesus in Jerusalem? (Mt. 27:28-30; 33-37)

**Day 3: Read Matthew 21:12-17.**

6. How does Jesus exercise his authority as king? (vv. 12-13)

7. Why does Jesus condemn the temple and its leadership? (v.13; 15:7-9; Jer.7:9-11)

\* The  symbol identifies verses for further study.

8. What is Jesus' act of cleansing and judgment pointing forward to? (Mt. 24:1-2)
9. In what ways does Jesus' presence in the temple restore it to a place of wholeness, inclusion and worship? (vv. 14-16)
10. What gives him the right to take over the temple in this way? (v.13; Mt. 3:16-17; 12: 6-8, 18)

**Day 4: Read Matthew 21:18-46.**

11. What is the cursing of the fig tree really all about? (v. 43, 45; 3:7-10)
12. Why can't/won't the chief priests and elders answer Jesus' question about where his authority is from (v. 25)?

What heart issues does Jesus expose?

13. The parables of the two sons and the tenants are aimed directly at the powerful religious elite in Jerusalem. What do the religious leaders have in common with the second son? (v.30)

The evil farmers? (vv. 34-39)

14. The religious leaders believed they were pleasing God by their religious practice. In reality their hearts were filled with evil and hypocrisy. How can we safeguard our hearts from the same deception? (Heb.3:12-15)

**Day 5: Read Matthew 21:18-46.**

15. What is God looking for in those who claim to be his people? (vv. 29, 32, 41b, 43)
16. The arrival of the new Kingdom means the old must go—the temple, the sacrifices, the priesthood, the traditions. What will Jesus' role be in building the new kingdom? (v. 42; Eph.2:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:4-7)
17. What must we have if we are to participate with Jesus in this grand but difficult building project? (v.21; Mt.17:20; Rom 4:18, 20-21; Phil.1:6)

*SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

## Trying to Trap the Teacher      Matthew 22:1-46

*"...and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions."* Matthew 22:46

**Day 1: Read Matthew 22:1-14.**

1. To whom is Jesus telling the parable of the wedding banquet? (Mt. 21:45) Which characters are they in the parable?
2. How do those who receive the King's first invitation respond? (vv. 3, 5-6)
3. When the many who were invited do not come, the king invites unthinkable guests for such an important royal feast. Who are they?
4. The king singles out one of the guests.
  - a. How has this man shown disrespect to the king and to this important celebration?
  - b. Jesus has invited you to a grand banquet. What clothes do you need to enter the king's banquet? (Gal. 3:26-27; Isa. 61:10; Rev. 19:8 \*📖 Zech. 3:3-5 and Rev. 3:4-5)

**Day 2: Read Matthew 22:15-22.**

5. What compliments do the disciples of the Pharisees and the Herodians give Jesus?

What does Jesus reveal about their true intent?

6. Those questioning Jesus represent political and religious powers. Why would Jesus be in trouble if he answers "No" to the question?

Why would he be in trouble if he answers "Yes"?

7. Roman coins bore Caesar's image and therefore belonged to him; whose image do we bear and therefore to whom do we belong? (Gen. 1:26-27)

8. What does it mean then to give "to God what is God's?"

\* The 📖 symbol identifies verses for further study.

**Day 3: Read Matthew 22:23-33.**

9. The Sadducees are wrong in their thinking about the resurrection because they don't know two things. What are they? (v. 29)
10. Think of something that you're struggling with; what difference does knowing the scriptures and the power of God make?
11. Jesus quotes Ex. 3:6; how does this verse reveal that there is life after death?

How has the power of the resurrection already been displayed to the disciples? (17:1-4)

**Day 4: Read Matthew 22:34-40.**

12. The legal expert tests Jesus by asking, what is the greatest commandment. How does Jesus answer this?
13. How does fulfilling these two commandments, fulfill all the others? (Consider the ten commandments Ex. 20:1-17.)
14. What does it look like to love God with all your heart? Soul? Mind?

Since this is the greatest commandment, how should it affect your life priorities?

**Day 5: Read Matthew 22:1-46.**

15. In verse 41 Jesus asks his own question about the identity of the Messiah.
  - a. What is the answer the Pharisees give to His question? (v. 42)
  - b. What title did the Spirit-led David ascribe to the Messiah in Ps. 110:1? (v. 44)
  - c. How does Peter respond in his statement of faith? (Mt. 16:15-17)
16. What is Jesus' point in asking the Pharisees why David called the Christ "Lord"? (Rom. 1:3-4)
17. The Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees, and crowds who heard Jesus in this chapter have responded in various ways. What are those responses? Consider your own response to Jesus. Pray for the Spirit to enable you to hear and respond *in faith* to the words of Jesus.

## SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS

## Warnings and Woes Matthew 23:1-39

*“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites!”* Matthew 23:13a

## Day 1: Read Matthew 23:1-12.

1. The phrase “in Moses’ seat” (v. 2) refers to “the teaching authority...or those officially responsible for interpreting and applying the laws of Moses.”<sup>1</sup>
  - a. What is Jesus’ evaluation of the teachers of the law and Pharisees as teaching authorities? (vv. 3b-4; 16a; 15:9)
  - b. Who is the true heir to the authority of Moses? (v. 10; Heb. 3:3-6)
2. What characterizes the teachers of the law and Pharisees? (vv. 3b-7) What characterizes the people of the kingdom of heaven? (vv. 11-12; \* 5:3-10; 6:1-6, 16-18)
3. Consider the things the Pharisees love (vv. 5-7). How do you love modern versions of the same things?
4. The Pharisees and teachers clung not just to Old Testament law but also to an extensive oral tradition that heaped do’s and don’ts on top of the original law.
  - a. What does Jesus say is the effect of adding on all these extra rules? (v. 4)
  - b. In contrast, what does Jesus offer? (11:28-30; \* Gal. 5:1)

## Day 2: Read Matthew 23:13-24.

5. Rather than welcoming the kingdom of heaven, how have the teachers of the law and Pharisees responded to it and to Jesus? (v. 13; 12:9-14; 12:22-24; 21:14-16a)
6. Jesus over and over condemns the teachers and Pharisees as hypocrites. (vv. 13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29) What is at the root of their hypocrisy? (15:8-9)
7. How are the Pharisees completely off target in their teaching about oaths? (vv. 16-22) How did Jesus’ teaching cut through such legalistic hair-splitting? (5:33-37)
8. The teachers of the law and Pharisees have become experts at keeping visible, measurable, external aspects of the law, like tithing herbs.
  - a. What “more important matters of the law” (v. 23b) have they neglected? (v. 23b; Mic. 6:6-8 \* Isa. 1:13-17)
  - b. What picture in verse 24 shows the absurdity of their skewed view of the law?

\* The  symbol identifies verses for further study.

<sup>1</sup>France, R. T. *Matthew*: Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2007, p. 324)

**Days 3 and 4: Read Matthew 23:13-36.**

9. There was in fact some debate among Jews about how a cup should be washed to be ceremonially clean. But what deeper truth is Jesus getting at? (vv. 25-26, 28; see also 15:18-19.)
  
10. We too are tempted to make our outsides look “clean,” no matter what the condition of our insides. How can you care for the condition of the inside of your cup? (Ps. 139:23-24; Rom. 12:1-3; Heb. 4:12)
  
11. How do the teachers of the law and Pharisees believe they are better than their forefathers? (v. 30)
  
12. Despite what the teachers and Pharisees may think about themselves, Jesus warns them that their generation will bear the guilt for “all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth....” (v. 35).  
Why will this guilt fall on them? (vv. 31-36; 27:20-26; \*📖 Compare 21:33-46.)
  
13. The problem with the Pharisees’ thinking goes beyond making some mistakes in interpreting Scripture. R.T. France writes that the Pharisees “followed a system which tended to understand righteousness in terms of more and more minute legal prescriptions, and which could therefore dangerously distort the whole question of what it means to please God....” (p. 323).
  - a. What essential truths did these blind religious leaders fail to see and teach? (Ps. 51:15-17; 4:1-8)
  
  - b. What are some ways you catch yourself thinking like a Pharisee, forgetting that the basis for life in the kingdom of heaven is grace?

**Day 5: Read Matthew 23:37-39.**

14. What image of gentle protection does Jesus use here? To whom does Jesus compare himself in using this image? (Ruth 2:12; Ps. 91:1, 4)
  
15. The teachers and Pharisees and many of the people were “not willing” (v. 37) to receive Jesus as the promised Messiah and Savior. Where does such a refusal leave any who will not take shelter under Jesus’ wings? (v. 33b; Heb. 2:2-3)
  
16. Take a moment for reflection. Thank God for the “great salvation” he has provided.

***SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*****Keep Watch      Matthew 24:1-51**

*"...but he who stands firm to the end will be saved." Matthew 24:13*

This week's passage is unlike any other we have encountered so far in Matthew. It contains prophecy and teaching that are complex and full of Old Testament symbolism. Some of the suffering Jesus describes may be general trials and persecution experienced by Christians throughout human history. But much of Jesus' prophecy here centers on two particular events: first, the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Romans in A.D. 70; and second, the return of Christ at an unknown time at the end of the world. While these two events are separated by a large span of time, they are both characterized by turmoil, distress, and judgment.

**Day 1: Read Matthew 24:1-8.**

1. The temple was God's dwelling place on earth and the center of worship for the nation. What does Jesus say will happen to the temple? What do you think this would mean to the disciples?
2. What two events do the disciples ask Jesus about?
3. Jesus answers their questions with an exhortation to be on their guard. What events are coming that might deceive or alarm them? (vv. 5-7; 23-26)

**Day 2: Read Matthew 24:9-25.**

4. What does Jesus tell his disciples to expect? (vv. 9-12)

Why is he telling them this now? (Jn. 16:1-4)

5. What truths give hope to the believer? (vv. 13-14)
6. What does it look like to "stand firm"? (Phil. 1:27-28a; \* Eph.6:10-18)

Is there an area in which you are struggling to stand firm? Pray and ask another person to pray for you.

7. The "abomination that causes desolation" (v. 15) is an image from the book of Daniel. The term refers to "something blasphemous, sacrilegious, some abominable object."<sup>1</sup> Daniel's prophecy was first fulfilled in 168 B.C. when Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the temple by building an altar to Zeus there and sacrificing a pig on it. Jesus' prophecy looks ahead to A.D. 70, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, carrying standards that were venerated by the Romans but considered blasphemous by the Jews.

What dire statements does Jesus make in verses 21 and 22 about the days when the abomination will appear?

\* The  symbol identifies verses for further study.

<sup>1</sup>Wright, Tom, *Matthew for Everyone, Part Two* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 118.

8. In the midst of these distressing times what provisions does God make for his elect? (vv. 15-25)

**Day 3: Read Matthew 24:23-35.**

9. The disciples have asked for the signs to look for his coming. (v. 3) What are they not to believe as signs of his coming? (vv. 23-26)

10. What is Jesus' coming compared to? (v. 27) Why?

11. What will happen when the Son of Man appears? (vv. 30-31)

12. Why will the nations mourn at Jesus' return? (Rev. 6:15-17)

**Day 4: Read Matthew 24:36-44.**

13. While Jesus gives the disciples the time of his coming, who is the only one who knows the exact day and hour?

14. What does the description of Noah's time tell us about the coming of the son of man?

What is the lesson from this for our time?

15. Jesus exhorts us to keep watch and be ready. How do we do this? (Col 3:1-4; 4:2; 1 Pet. 1:13-16)

**Day 5: Read Matthew 24:42-51.**

16.

	What Characterizes:	What lies in Store for:
The Faithful Servant		
The Wicked Servant		

17. A faithful servant is watchful and ready. In what ways do you need to prepare yourself to be ready for Christ's coming?

## SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS

### The Blessed and the Cursed      Matthew 25:1-46

*“When the Son of Man comes in his glory...[a]ll the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”*  
Matthew 25:31-32

#### Day 1: Read Matthew 25:1-13.

1. What do you think the foolish virgins have assumed about the bridegroom’s arrival? In contrast, why are the wise virgins wise?
2. What happens to the virgins who are ready for the bridegroom’s arrival? To the virgins who are not ready?
3. Who is the bridegroom? (9:14-15; Rev. 19:6b-9)
4. What is the point of this parable? (v. 13; 24:44; \* 1 Thes. 5:1-3)

#### Day 2: Read Matthew 25:14-30.

5. What do the first two servants do with the talents (units of money) entrusted to them? What does the third servant do?
6. How does the returned master respond to the first two servants? What do they receive?
7. How does the third servant’s view of his master effect what he does with the talent he was given?

How might the actions of the first two servants tell us how they view the master?

#### Day 3: Read Matthew 25:14-30.

8. “Talents” in this parable might stand for anything we’ve been given, possibly including our talents and abilities, but certainly including the blessings and opportunities we have as heirs of the kingdom of heaven.
  - a. Name some of the blessings and gifts you have been given.
  - b. How can you invest one of these blessings or gifts to honor the Master?

\* The  symbol identifies verses for further study.

9. Our culture tells us to develop our talents and abilities as a means of self-fulfillment. What motivates servants in the Kingdom to be faithful? (Phil. 2:1-2; Col. 3:23-24)

**Day 4: Read Matthew 25:31-46.**

10. What is the scene in this passage? (v. 31) What is happening? (vv. 32-33;  Rev. 20:11-15)

11. For what does the King commend the sheep?

For what does the King condemn the goats?

12. What grand, Nobel-worthy act of philanthropy have the "sheep" performed? What scandalous, splashed-across-the-front-page kind of sin have the "goats" committed?

13. What happens to the "sheep"? What happens to the "goats"?

14. All of our readings this week—the parable of the virgins, the parable of the talents, and the account of the sheep and goats—include pictures of judgment. In all three passages how many groups are people divided into? Is there any "in-between" group?

**Day 5: Read Matthew 25:31-46.**

15. Who are the "brothers" Jesus refers to in verse 40? (12:48-49)

16. Why is a person's treatment of Jesus' followers the test here for true faith? In other words, what does kindness toward a disciple of Jesus say about the person's relationship to Jesus himself? (v. 40; 10:40-42; Gal. 6:10)

17. How does this judgment scene challenge your priorities and the way you spend your time?

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

### Jesus Betrayed and Abandoned    Matthew 26:1-46

*“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me.  
Yet not as I will, but as you will.” Matthew 26:39b*

#### Day 1: Read Matthew 26:1-16.

1. The Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of the Passover were celebrated together to commemorate the escape of Israel out of Egypt. How were the Israelites to celebrate these feasts? (Deut. 16:1-8)
  
2. All his life Jesus has soaked up the scriptures. What has he learned from them about what must happen to him? (Ps. 22:1-2, 7, 12-18; Isa. 52:13-14; 53:3-12)
  
3. The religious authorities have become increasingly agitated with Jesus. (21:15, 45-46)
  - a. Who initiates the plot to kill Jesus? (vv. 3-4)
  
  - b. Why are they afraid to arrest Jesus during the day while he is out in public?
  
  - c. How does Judas play into their hands? (vv. 4, 14-16)
  
4. What does the woman in verses 6-13 understand that the disciples don't?

How has Jesus' prophecy about her been fulfilled?

#### Day 2: Read Matthew 26:17-35.

5. The Passover is normally a joyful family celebration. What is on Jesus' mind that is dampening the evening's mood? (vv. 20-25; 31-35; \*  Jn. 13: 21; Ps. 41: 5-9)
  
6. Where do you think Judas was sitting during this meal? What do you learn about him from the way he behaves?
  
7. What is the new meaning that Jesus gives to the bread and wine normally served at the Passover meal? (vv. 26-29)
  
8. Why do Christians continue to eat this meal together? (v. 28; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

\* The  symbol identifies verses for further study.

9. What does eating the Lord's Supper mean to you?

**Day 3: Read Matthew 26: 30-35.**

10. Jesus, like a good and caring shepherd, is concerned for his sheep. He knows that his coming ordeal will be too much for them, and like frightened sheep they will all panic and run. (v. 31)  
What are the two things Jesus tells the disciples in verse 32, and why are they so significant?  
(Mt. 28: 5-7, 20; Jn. 16:21-22;  compare verse 31 with Ezk. 34:11-12, 15-16, 23-24)

11. Peter's desires and intentions are good but what does he still not understand?

**Day 4: Read Matthew 26:36-46.**

12. Why are the disciples so sleepy? (v. 41b; Lk. 22:45)

Why should they be praying fervently? (vv. 31-35, 41, 45)

13. Why is prayer so important when we are struggling? (Ps. 46; Phil. 4:6-7)

14. List the names of some people that you know, who are going through their own "Gethsemane". After studying this passage, how will your prayers for them be different?

**Day 5: Read Matthew 26:36-46.**

15. How is Jesus' sorrow described? (v. 37)

What is he struggling with?

How does the writer of Hebrews further enlighten us about Jesus' suffering? (Heb. 2:17-18; 4:15)

16. What is the difference between the cup that Jesus gives the disciples (vv. 27-28) and the cup that he must drink? (vv.39, 42;  1 Cor. 10:16; Isa. 51:17)

17. Look back over this lesson. What is it about Jesus — who he is and what he does — that you are thankful for? ( Psalm 118:26-29)

## SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS

Betrayed, Deserted, Disowned      Matthew 26:47—27:26

*“But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled.”* Matthew 26:56 (NIV)

**Days 1 and 2: Read Matthew 26:47-68.**

1. Judas comes with the mob to betray Jesus. How is this consistent with his character? (26:14-16; Jn. 6:70-71; 12:4-6)
  
2. Why does Jesus forbid his disciples to fight for him? (vv. 52-54; Jn. 18:10-11, 36)
  
3. Jesus is taken to be questioned by the top religious leaders. What are they looking for? Why? (v. 59)

Did they find what they were looking for? (v. 60; 1 Pet. 2:22-23)

4. The high priest zeroes in on the central issue that everyone must consider regarding Jesus.
  - a. What is it? (v. 63)
  
  - b. After being silent to all the false accusations, Jesus finally speaks. What does he say about himself?
  
  - c. How has acknowledging this truth made a difference in your life?
  
5. How do Caiaphas, the high priest, and the rest of the council respond? (vv. 65-68)

Why? (Jn. 5:18, 19:7;  Lev. 24:10-16)

**Day 3: Read Matthew 26:69-75.**

6. Describe Peter when:

Jesus predicts that he will betray him	31-35	
Jesus is praying in the garden	40-46	
Jesus is arrested	51-52; Jn. 18:10	
Jesus is being tried	57-58	
He is identified as a disciple	69-74	
He realizes what he's done	75	

\*The  symbol identifies verses for further study.

7. Peter has failed his Lord miserably. How would you advise a friend who has failed like Peter?
  
8. All four gospel writers record Peter's denial of Jesus yet this is not the end of the story for Peter. Fast forward 30 years; what has Peter grown to understand about suffering for being a follower of Jesus? (1 Pet. 4:12-16, 19)

**Day 4: Read Matthew 27:1-10.**

9. Why do the chief priests and elders bring Jesus to Pilate? (vv. 1, 18; Jn. 18:31)
  
10. How do Judas' and Peter's responses to their sin differ? (26:75; 27:3-5; 2 Cor. 7:10)
  
11. How are the priests focusing on one area of obeying God while clearly sinning in a bigger area? (v. 6;  Mt. 23:23-24; Jn. 18:28)
  
12. In what ways have you been convicted of this type of hypocrisy?

**Day 5: Read Matthew 27:11-26.**

13. How is Pilate's response to Jesus different from the religious leaders'?
  
14. Now it is the people's chance to make a decision about Jesus.
  - a. Who are they being influenced by?
  
  - b. What do they decide?
  
  - c. What responsibility are they willing to bear for their decision? (v. 25)
  
  - d. Is there any hope for those who commit such high-handed treason against God's anointed one? (Acts 3:13-15, 17-20)
  
15. Recount some of the sorrows that Jesus, the "Man of Sorrows" (Isa. 53:3) faced in these final hours before his death (26:36-27:26). Take time to respond to what Jesus has endured for you.

*SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

**This is Not the End of the Story      Matthew 27:27-56**

*“And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.”*    Matthew 27:50

**Day 1: Read Matthew 27:27-31.**

1. The soldiers mock and ridicule Jesus, even though he is a true king. Make the following comparisons:

Equipment of a King		Mockery		What he deserves
Court	v. 27		Rev. 7:9	
Robe	v. 28		Rev. 1:12-13	
Crown	v. 29		Rev. 19:11-12a	
Scepter	v. 29		Heb. 1:8	
Laud/Worship	v. 29		Rev. 5: 12-14	

**Day 2: Read Matthew 27:32-40.**

2. “Those condemned to be crucified had to carry their own crosses.”<sup>1</sup> Why then might Simon have been enlisted to carry the cross for Jesus?
3. Tradition has it that wine mixed with gall was used for its’ narcotic effect. Why might people about to be crucified be offered this drink? Why might Jesus have refused taking this?
4. There were many ways in which “criminals” could be punished. Think about what is involved with actually being crucified. What about this method is particularly humiliating? Cruel?

**Day 3: Read Matthew 27:38-44.**

5. Jesus is taunted while he’s hanging on the cross. How does he respond? (1 Pet. 2:23)
6. Read Psalm 22:1-18. What aspects of Jesus’ crucifixion do you find in these verses?  
(\*Psalm 22:19-31)

\*The  symbol identifies verses for further study.

<sup>1</sup> Hendricksen, William. The Gospel of Matthew: Edinburgh, Great Britain: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1973, p. 962

**Day 4: Read Matthew 27:45-50.**

7. Jesus hung on the cross for hours. To whom does he cry out as he is dying?
  
8. What do you think of Jesus' despairing cry? What does this cry (v. 46) reveal about what Jesus was experiencing/enduring? (Isa. 53:10a; 2 Cor. 5:21a; Gal. 3:13)
  
9. What was the purpose of Jesus' dying? What did he accomplish? (Isa. 53:5; Jn. 1:29)
  
10. What makes the onlookers remark "Surely he was the Son of God!"?
  
11. What do you want to cry out when you take this "story" deep in to your heart?

**Day 5: Read Matthew 27:51-56.**

12. What miraculous signs accompany Jesus' death?
  
13. What little detail does Matthew note in verse 51? What huge significance does this small detail have? (Heb. 9:2-3, 7, 11-12; Heb. 10:19-22)
  
14. It was probably not very safe or politically correct to be associated with a crucified convict. Who do we find actively surrounding Jesus? Who is glaringly missing? (Mt. 26:35-56)
  
15. Read Isaiah 53. Pick one aspect of the suffering Christ that touches your heart. Share it with your group.

## *SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS*

The Risen King      Matthew 27:57–28:20

*“Then Jesus came to them and said,  
‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.’”* Matthew 28:18

**Day 1: Read Matthew 27:57-66.**

1. Joseph of Arimathea is a man who has a lot to lose by associating himself with an executed “criminal.”
  - a. What do we learn about Joseph from this passage? (See also Lk. 23:50-51; \* Jn. 19:38-42)
  - b. What does he do for Jesus?
2. Jesus is dead and buried, and his disciples have made themselves scarce.
  - a. Why are the chief priests and Pharisees still uneasy?
  - b. What thorough precautions do they take?

**Day 2: Read Matthew 28:1-15.**

3. What dramatic events does Matthew describe in verses 2-4?
4. Who are the first witnesses of the empty tomb and then of Jesus himself?
  - a. What things does the angel tell them to do? (vv. 5-7)
  - b. What is in their hearts as they depart from the tomb?
5. Jesus meets the women as they hurry away from the tomb. How do they respond to him?
6. How do the chief priests respond to the news of what happened at the tomb? (\* Compare Lk. 16:31, from Jesus’ parable.)
7. Peek ahead to verses 16-17. How do the disciples respond when they see Jesus?
8. As you look through this passage which of the three responses do you most identify with? Why?

**Day 3: Read Matthew 28:1-10.**

9. What are some implications of Jesus’ resurrection for us today? (Rom. 4:25; 6:4; 8:34; 1 Pet. 1:3-5; \* 1 Cor. 15:14, 17-19)

For the future? (1 Cor. 15:21-22, 42-44; Rev. 1:17-18)

\*The  symbol identifies verses for further study.

10. Consider the following quotation: “Those who believe in the resurrection....need, of course, to be sure that they are themselves allowing the resurrection to blow constantly like a fresh breeze through their own lives, thoughts and imaginations. There’s no point defending and explaining God’s new world if you’re still living in the old one yourself.”<sup>1</sup>

How can the resurrection refresh and renew your outlook on the things of everyday life?

**Day 4: Read Matthew 28:16-20.**

11. Throughout his book, Matthew reminds his readers that Jesus is the Messiah, the Anointed King, who is ushering in a new kingdom. Trace the theme of Jesus’ kingship through the following verses.

Verse(s)	Themes of the King and his Kingdom
Genealogy (1:1)	
Birth (2:1-2, 6)	
Start of Ministry (3:1-2; 4:17)	
Teaching (e.g., 5:3; 13:11, 24, 31, 44, 47; 18:3-4, 23; 19:14; 20:1; 22:2; 25:1)	
Entry into Jerusalem (21:4-5, 9)	
Trial and Crucifixion (27:11, 37)	
Commissioning the Disciples (28:18)	

12. The risen King Jesus states, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (v. 18). How should Jesus’ resurrection and comprehensive authority affect the way we view the commands, the teaching, and the actions we have studied this year?

**Day 5: Read Matthew 28:16-20.**

13. What does Jesus command his disciples (then and now)?

What promise does he give them (and us)? (v. 20b)

14. The teaching that Jesus calls his disciples to is not just the passing on of information. What does it mean to teach others to obey everything that Jesus has commanded?

15. In light of the Great Commission, what is your life to be about?

<sup>1</sup>Wright, NT. Matthew for Everyone: Part Two: London, England: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002, p. 204