

## Introduction to the Book of Matthew



Matthew was written in order to present Jesus as the King of the Jews. In contrast to the gospel of Mark, which we've already studied, Matthew does not worry about presenting the events as they occurred in chronological order. His concern is presenting themes and concepts in order that we might recognize Jesus for who He is!

### Author:

Matthew, the tax collector formerly called Levi, wrote this book that bears his name. As a Jewish man whose life was radically transformed by the grace of Christ, Matthew is passionate about presenting Jesus as the rightful heir to the Jewish throne.

### Background & Setting:

Matthew was written to the Jewish people in order to present Jesus as their king. In the opening genealogy, Matthew traces Christ's roots all the way back to Abraham! He also quotes extensively from the Old Testament for this purpose as well. Jesus came to fulfill prophecy.

### Themes:

Matthew spends time developing the theme of the OT kingdom more than any other gospel writer. He presents Jesus' discourses, as well as much of the conflict that took place between Jesus and the Pharisees. All of these ingredients serve to present Jesus as the victorious King.

### Think about it:

Here are a few things to pay careful attention to:

1. Watch as Matthew presents Jesus as king. Identify the Jewish flavor to these passages.
2. Take heed to the passages where Jesus interacts with the Pharisees. We all have Pharisaic tendencies!
3. Listen to Jesus' discourses. He is the greatest preacher who ever lived.
4. Take comfort in the way that Jesus relates to sinners. It's how He relates to you.

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**Date:** Thursday, April 4

**Passage:** Matthew 1

1. Matthew traces the genealogy of Jesus all the way back to the Abrahamic covenant. Why do you think he does this? What would this have done for his Jewish audience?

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2. Matthew also includes several women in this genealogy. This was highly unusual. List the names of women that you can find here. What does their inclusion teach you about God's grace?

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3. Joseph has often been called "*The Silent Partner in the Incarnation.*" In reading about him in verses 18-25, what sticks out to you about his character?

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4. According to verse 22, why did all of the events that took place leading up to Jesus' birth occur?

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5. What do you learn about the faithfulness of your God in Matthew 1? How can you trust him more this week because of what you've read today?

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It is impossible to question the right that Jesus has to the throne (vv. 1-17). It's also difficult to comprehend the magnificent grace of God in using unworthy vessels to bring about His plan. Take heart believer, God can use you!



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**Date:** Friday, April 5  
**Passage:** Matthew 2

1. What did Herod say that his reason was for wanting to see the Christ-child (v. 8)? What was his real reason?

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2. Matthew 2 allows us more of a glimpse into the character of Joseph. How did he react when he was told to take Mary & Jesus into Egypt? Do you think he was confused? What does this show you about your responsibility to follow God's plan, even when things don't make sense?

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3. Notice again how Jesus fulfills prophecy (v. 17). Again, do you remember why Matthew includes statements like that in this book? Do you think his plan was effective?

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4. So Jesus returns to Nazareth with His parents (vv. 19-23). What a journey that had been on so far, and He wasn't even a full-grown child! How do you think they felt at this point in time?

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5. That's the way God's plan often works. It takes us on twists & turns, and it never offers us comfort or stability. Can you think of any times in your life that God's plan for you didn't seem to make sense? How did you react? How can the testimony of Mary & Joseph help you better understand how God desires you to trust Him?

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**Date:** Saturday, April 6

**Passage:** Proverbs 26; Review James 3-5

1. One of the greatest besetting sins that teenagers struggle with is the sin of laziness. Read Proverbs 26: 13-16. What are the characteristics of a lazy person? Are any of them present in your life?

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2. Read Proverbs 26:22. Is gossip appealing? Why do you think this is the case? Where do they hurt the most, though, according to this verse?

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3. Think back on what you learned regarding the tongue in James 3 this past week. How have you used your tongue in an improper way over the past seven days? Pray for grace to conquer that tiny, powerful muscle!

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4. How can you defeat the devil (James 4:7)? How can you draw near to God (James 4:8)? How can you do both of those things this week?

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5. What one truth from James 5 impacted you the most? How can you apply it to your life this week?

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Date: Sunday, April 7

Passage: Proverbs 27; Review Matthew 1-2

1. Proverbs 27:1 kind of reminds me of a verse we had in James. What does it have in common with James 4:15?

What does this concept teach you about God's will for your life?

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2. Between wrath, anger, and jealousy, which one is the worst (v. 4)?

Can you think of any jealousy that you are struggling with right now? What is it? What a powerfully destructive sin!

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3. Proverbs 17:17 says that *"iron sharpens iron, so one friend sharpens another."* Can you think of any "iron-sharpening" friends that you have? Who are they? Do you think they would describe you as "iron sharpening?" Why or why not?

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4. Look at Matthew 1. How is God's grace seen in this chapter?

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5. How can the faithful example of Joseph from Matthew 2 inspire you to live for Jesus this week?

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Date: Monday, April 8

Passage: Matthew 3

1. John the Baptist had an incredibly unique ministry. He wandered about in the wilderness with a purpose – to declare that Jesus was coming! What was the result of his teaching (v. 5)?

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2. What was John's response when he saw the Pharisees & Sadducees coming for baptism (v. 7)? Why did he react this way?

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3. When John said to "bear fruit for repentance" in verse 8, he was talking about the importance of walking the walk, not just talking the talk. For generations, people have perfected the art of talking the talk without walking the walk. The Pharisees were great at it. How are you at walking the walk? Would your friends say that your lifestyle backs up your confession? Why or why not?

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4. Christ was baptized by John in order to fully identify with sinners (v. 15). This is the first event in His public ministry. It pictured His death, and it identified him with the sinners that He came to save. What's your reaction to this event?

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We've just been introduced to Jesus' public ministry for the first time. His actions in this passage were met with the overwhelming pleasure of God (vv. 16-17). Take a moment today to thank Christ for coming to identify with sinners. He came to identify with you.



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Date: Tuesday, April 9

Passage: Matthew 4

1. This is one of the greatest chapters of comfort in all of the New Testament. Jesus faced temptation for you.

Notice how the chapter begins. What is significant about verse one? Who led Jesus to be tempted? Why do you think He did that?

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2. How does Jesus refute every aspect of temptation? What does that tell you regarding the importance of memorizing the Word of God?

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3. What was the focus of Jesus' teaching (v. 17)? Who else preached the same message?

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4. Jesus calls His first disciples in verses 18-22. What's important about how He decided to follow Him? Did they take a long time deliberating? What does that tell you about what Jesus expects of you?

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5. Now, in verses 23-25, Jesus is really starting to gather some fame. What actions (in verse 23) led to the spread of His fame?

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This chapter unfolds how Jesus defeated temptation, how He called His disciples, and how His fame began to spread. Jesus expects the same dedication from you that He expected from His disciples more than 2,000 years ago. Pray and ask God for the grace to give your all to Him.



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**Date:** Wednesday, April 10

**Passage:** Matthew 5

1. The Sermon on the Mount begins in Matthew 5. This is known as the greatest sermon that has ever been preached. The Beatitudes comprise verses 1-12. Read through the list. As you read, which one impacts you the most? Why?

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2. Christ has called us each to be His witnesses. This is made abundantly clear in verses 13-16. In fact, if you're not functioning as salt & light, you're not doing what God has called you to do. This means standing out from the world. How are you doing? Who are you impacting for Jesus through your distinctiveness?

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3. We can't cover every part of this chapter with questions, so let's skip to verses 27-30. Jesus' point here is that the heart of the problem of sin is the problem of the heart. How have you seen that to be true in your own life?

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4. In Jesus' teaching on divorce, what does he indicate is the one exception to His law prohibiting divorce of any kind (v. 32)?

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5. Read verses 38-48. How should you treat your enemies? Why? How are you doing when it comes to reacting to those who mistreat you?

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**Date:** Thursday, April 11

**Passage:** Matthew 6

1. Matthew is careful to document Jesus' teaching regarding hypocritical religion (vv. 1-4). Hypocritical religion is a show. It is empty & it is all for the purpose of man's praise. How does Jesus contrast hypocritical religion (vv. 3-4)? What will happen to those who practice true religion (v. 4)?

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2. How do hypocrites like to pray (v. 5)? How does your Father want you to pray (v. 6)? What kind of encouragement can you receive from verse 8 this morning?

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3. As you read through the Lord's prayer (vv. 9-13), think about your prayer life. How faithful are you in praying like God wants you to pray? What specific aspects of your prayer life need improvement?

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4. Jesus' teaching in verses 19-24 runs in direct opposition to the American dream. You can't serve God & money! Are you radically sold-out to follow Jesus, or are you hanging on to your own plan?

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5. Read verses 25-34. What verses concerning the provision of your Kind Heavenly Father comfort you the most. Why do those verses provide you with such comfort?

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**Date:** Friday, April 12  
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1. Matthew 7:1 is one of the most misquoted, misused verses in the entire Bible. Clearly, Jesus is not prohibiting any type of judgment at all (see v. 16). In fact, we have a responsibility to judge righteously (Jn. 7:24). Jesus is prohibiting self-righteous judgment specifically in regards to another person's salvific standing. Based on what you know about the Pharisees, why would Jesus need to offer this command?

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2. What does verses 7-11 tell you regarding the Father's disposition towards your prayers?

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3. How are you doing when it comes to keeping the "Golden Rule" (v. 12-14)? Do you treat others as you would like to be treated? Who are you wronging in this way?

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4. Verses 21-23 are stunning. There are some that look like they follow Jesus who will be cast away at the last day. What does that tell you regarding being sure of your salvation?

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5. Why were the crowds astonished when Jesus finished speaking (v. 29)? If the crowds were astonished, how should you respond to what He says here in the Sermon on the Mount?

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**Date:** Saturday, April 13

**Passage:** Proverbs 28; Review Matthew 3-4

1. Why do you think that the “wicked flee when no man pursues” according to Prov. 28:1? How is your conscience?

Is it clear, or do you live in constant fear of someone finding out about your hidden sin?

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2. Read Proverbs 28:13. How should you react when you are convicted over sin? Are you doing that? Are there any sins that you are attempting to keep hidden? You cannot hide from God!

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3. According to verse 26, what kind of a person is a fool? Do you trust in your own wisdom, or are you trusting in God?

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4. Consider the life & ministry of John the Baptist from Matthew 3. Are you willing to live in sacrifice as he did? Why or why not?

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5. What was the most important principle that you learned from Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness in Matthew 4? How can you apply that principle to your life this week?

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Date: Sunday, April 14

Passage: Proverbs 29; Review Matthew 5-7

1. What happens to a child that doesn't experience the loving discipline of his parents according to Proverbs 29:15. What, according to this verse, is the purpose of discipline?

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2. Proverbs 29:25 says that *"The fear of man brings a snare."* It will ultimately trap you and ruin you. Do you struggle with the fear of man? In what way? What can you do to defeat that fear (hint: see the end of verse 25)?

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3. Look at Matthew 5. Remember what we talked about regarding your heart. How can you – this week – strive to guard your heart against sin?

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4. Consider the Lord's Prayer from Matthew 6. How can your prayer life change as a result of what Jesus taught about prayer?

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**Date:** Monday, April 15

**Passage:** Matthew 8

1. In this chapter, Jesus begins His ministry of healing by healing a leper (vv. 1-4), the Centurion's servant (vv. 5-13), and Peter's mother-in-law (vv. 14-17). What, according to verse 10, seems to be the most important factor regarding these healings? How would you characterize your faith in Jesus' ability to answer your prayers? Is it weak or strong?

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2. Verses 18-22 are all about the cost of following Jesus. How would you describe the cost of following Christ in your own words? Is it simple or complicated? What is it that you are unwilling to lose in order to follow Him?

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3. What surprises you about the reaction of the disciples to Jesus' miracle in verse 27? Yet how often to you possess little faith in the power of God? Why does your faith become weak like the disciples?

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4. What does Christ's final miracle tell you about his power over demonic forces? What comfort can you find in this?

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5. In this chapter, Jesus has shown us his power over sickness, nature, and the forces of evil. He has also articulated the cost of following Him. How does this chapter make you respond to Him?

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Date: Tuesday, April 16

Passage: Matthew 9

1. Jesus isn't done with his healing. He's just getting started. In this chapter, explore the healings of Jesus, and write down what specific lesson each of them teaches you.

| Healing   | Lesson |
|---|--------|
| Jesus heals a paralytic (vv. 1-8).                      |        |
| Jesus heals a woman & raises a girl to life (vv. 18-26) |        |
| Jesus heals two blind men (vv. 27-31).                  |        |
| Jesus heals a dumb man (vv. 32-34).                     |        |

2. Read verses 35-38. How does Jesus react when He sees lost people in need of a shepherd (v. 36)? What is the greatest obstacle to Jesus' rescue mission (v. 37)? What are we to do because of that obstacle (v. 38)? Are you willing to go?

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**Date:** Wednesday, April 17

**Passage:** Matthew 10

1. Matthew 10 includes the bulk of Jesus' famous discourse on discipleship. We'll not be able to cover all of it with questions, but let's break it down into a few important paragraphs. What was to be the focus of the disciples' message (v. 7)? What sort of payment were they to expect for their labors (v. 8-10)? What does this tell you about the dedication they were supposed to have?

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2. Read verses 16-25 again. Did Jesus promise "smooth sailing?" Explain why or why not. Should you expect a Christian life of ease?

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3. How does Jesus calm the disciples' fears after telling them of the coming persecution (vv. 29-31)? How can that encourage you as you decide to follow Him faithfully?

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4. Jesus' point in verses 34-39 is that though the gospel ultimately brings peace with God, it usually brings about conflict here on earth. Have you ever experienced "gospel conflict?" What was it like? What's the reward for persevering (v. 39)?

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5. What is the motivation for accepting the disciples of Jesus (vv. 40-42)? How can that motivation inform your actions today?

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Date: Thursday, April 18

Passage: Matthew II

1. What does Jesus say to the followers of John who are inquiring as to His identity (vv. 4-6)? Does this strike you as odd? What would you expect Him to say? What point do you think He is trying to get across?

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2. What strikes you the most regarding Jesus' "biography" of John in verses 7-18? Are there any aspects of Jesus' testimony of John that inspire you to be like him? What are they?

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3. Why did Jesus denounce several cities (v. 20)? What does that tell you about the importance of biblical repentance in your own life? Are you willing to repent & change when God shows you areas in your life that need to be fixed?

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4. Read the sweet promise of Jesus in verses 25-30. His point is this: Stop trying to defeat sin all by yourselves. Come to me. I will give you rest. How can that promise impact the way that you live your life today?

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*"Come, come unto Me, All you who are weary, All who are weak, tired and lonely. Come, come unto Me. Strong arms will enfold you and lift you up. Oh, come unto Me. All are invited; there's none who aren't welcome To know of my comfort and peace. My arms are opened, and My voice is calling to come, Simply trust and believe. Oh, Come, come unto Me. Live with Me forever. All those who seek Me will find Me!" – K. Dosso*



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**Date:** Friday, April 19  
**Passage:** Matthew 12

1. The Pharisees were angry with Jesus because they did not realize that He, being God, was Lord of the Sabbath (vv. 1-8). This means that He has the right to overrule man-made Sabbatarian laws. Jesus is claiming deity in this passage. Why do you think this made the Pharisees so mad?

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2. Some people have taken verses 22-32, and tried to construct a theology of an “unpardonable sin” based on Jesus’ words in verse 32. There is no such sin. What Jesus was saying is that in that time & place, attributing the works of the Holy Spirit to Satan was unforgivable. Why did Jesus take such a strong stand on this matter?

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3. According to verses 33-37, how do we know if someone is a “good” person or not? When people look at the fruit of your life, do you think they consider you to be a “good” tree? Why or why not?

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4. Jesus uses the illustration of Jonah to foretell His own death in verses 38-42. What does that tell you about His deity?

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5. Who, according to verse 49, is identified with the family of God? Is this some sort of “works salvation?” Why or why not?

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**Date:** Saturday, April 20

**Passage:** Proverbs 30; Review Matthew 8-9

1. What are the two dying wishes of the author of this Proverb in verses 7-9? Why do you think these wishes are so important?

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2. Read verses 17. What's the punishment for the person who mocks his father? Do you ever disrespect your parents? Do you think God takes that seriously? How should that impact your relationship with them?

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3. What's the counsel given to the foolish person who exalts himself in verse 32? Do you think there's a chance that you might need to put your hand over your own mouth?

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4. Look back over at Matthew 8. What's the cost of following Jesus? Are you willing to pay that cost? Why or why not?

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5. What is the greatest impediment to Jesus' rescue mission according to Matthew 9:37? How can you help Jesus, according to verse 38?

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**Date:** Sunday, April 21

**Passage:** Proverbs 31; Review Matthew 10-12

1. Why is King Lemuel encouraged by his mother not to drink (vv. 4-5)?

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2. Read the passage on the virtuous woman, given in verses 10-31. What characteristics of this woman impact you the most? Why?

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3. As you consider what we learned about Jesus' discourse on discipleship in Matthew 10, what aspect of discipleship troubles you the most? Why? How can you give that over to the Lord this week?

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4. Meditate on Jesus' promise of rest in Matthew 11:29-30. How can this promise encourage you as you serve Him this week?

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5. A "tree is known by its fruit" according to Matthew 12:33-37. What does your fruit look like? How are you known?

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**Passage:** Proverbs 31; Review Matthew 10-12

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**Date:** Monday, April 22

**Passage:** Matthew 13

1. Consider the parable of the sower that is found in verses 1-9. What kind of soil do you think that your heart is for the seed of the Word of God? Have you seen fruit, or do you possess a heart of thorns?

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2. Jesus speaks in parables in order to make known the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven (vv. 10-17). Read the parable of the weeds in verses 24-30. This parable is explained in verses 36-43. Explain the sobering challenge that this parable brings in your own words.

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3. Consider the remaining parables in this chapter. We are told the parable of the hidden treasure (vv. 44-45), the pearl of great value (vv. 45-46), the net (vv. 47-50), and the new & old treasures (vv. 51-52). Which parable is most convicting to you as you consider your Christian life. Why do you find it so convicting?

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4. Jesus was rejected in His own city (vv. 53-58). To the human aspect of Jesus' nature, this must have been a very painful thing for Him to experience. Why did the people from his town become offended at Him? Should we expect the same, or different treatment?

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**Date:** Tuesday, April 23

**Passage:** Matthew 14

1. Herod was one of the most wicked rulers in the history of mankind. As a “puppet-ruler” for Roman, he ruled with ruthless hatred for his subjects. Consider the death of John the Baptist in verses I-II. This societal outcast that we are introduced to in chapter 3 ultimately lays down his life for the one that he has spent his days proclaiming. What does his testimony tell you about the cost of discipleship? Are you willing to pay that cost?

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2. Jesus withdraws from the crowds (v. 13) in order to mourn the passing of His cousin, John. But the crowds followed Him. Don't you think He probably wanted some privacy? What can you learn about the way that He responded to them in verse 14? Are you willing to minister to people even when you don't feel like it?

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3. I love the story of Peter's faith in verses 28-33. What is the key to having effective Christian faith (vv. 30-31). When do you find it difficult to keep your eyes on Jesus?

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4. *“As many as touched the fringe of His garment were made well (v. 36).”* Faith is the key to God's working on your behalf. How's your faith today? What are some things you doubt about? How can you give them to Jesus?

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**Date:** Wednesday, April 24

**Passage:** Matthew 15

1. In order to circumvent the commands of God related to honoring parents, some people claimed that they could not give money to their aging parents because they had dedicated that money to God. Jesus tells the Pharisees that such extra-biblical tradition voids the Word of God (v. 6). We must be careful never to allow tradition to trump Scripture. What are some traditions that you find may tempt you to replace the Word of God?

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2. Jesus' point in talking with the Pharisees is always that the heart of the problem is the problem of the heart (vv. 10-11). External standards don't matter if your heart is corrupt. This offended the Pharisees (v. 12). Why do you think that the Pharisees were offended? What Pharisaical tendencies do you see in your own life?

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3. Why did Jesus heal the Canaanite woman (v. 28)? This is a common theme in Matthew. What kind of faith do you have in God's ability to work for you?

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4. Jesus continues to perform miracles (vv. 29-39), because He is touched with compassion for His people (v. 32). How can the compassion that Jesus had for the crowds comfort you today?

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*"Father, I thank you for the compassion that Jesus had on the crowds that He ministered to. I know that He will have compassion on me as well. Help me to live with a pure heart & please Him today."*



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**Date:** Thursday, April 25

**Passage:** Matthew 16

1. The Pharisees could determine the weather, but they were unable to determine the fact that the long-awaited Messiah was in their midst (vv. 1-4). What a sad, sad story. What does it tell you about the hard hearts of sinners apart from the grace of Christ? What does it show you about your own heart?

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2. The disciples realize that they forgot to bring food with them (v. 5), so they begin to freak out (v. 7). What's Jesus' response to them (vv. 8-11)? How often in your own life do you forget to trust in God, even though He's worked on your behalf so many times? Are you going through any difficult situation right now? How can you trust in Him?

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3. Peter's confession of Jesus as the Christ is significant in Matthew's gospel account (vv. 13-20). Jesus has been identified for the first time as the Messiah. Why is this so important?

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4. Even though Peter saw Jesus as Messiah, he didn't really grasp His full identity. Which part of Jesus' Messianic nature did Peter not agree with (v. 22)?

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5. Explain the cost of discipleship from verses 24-28. Think about it. Are you willing to take the challenge? Why or Why not?

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**Date:** Friday, April 26

**Passage:** Matthew 17

1. Viewing the Transfiguration (vv. 1-8) must have been a remarkable experience for Peter, James, and John. Notice what Peter says in verse 4. He believes that it would be profitable to build a place of worship for Christ, as well as Moses & Eli jah. What does Peter not understand about Jesus (v. 5)?

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2. The Jewish leaders failed to recognize that “Eli jah” had already come (v. 12) in the person of John the Baptist (v. 13). Is it any wonder, then, that they got the identity of Jesus wrong as well? What does this tell you about the mindset of the Jewish leaders as a whole?

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3. Next, the disciples endure somewhat of an embarrassing situation (vv. 14-20). They are unable to cast out the demons from a boy because of their lack of faith (v. 20). What does that tell you about the importance of faith? What are some ways in your life that you demonstrate a lack of faith?

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4. Jesus set a tremendous example while he was here on earth by subjecting himself to the Roman government (vv. 24-27). In America today, Christians routinely take it upon themselves to mock, criticize, and blatantly disobey the government. Based on the example of Jesus, do you think He would act like American Christians do today towards government? Why or why not?

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**Date:** Saturday, April 27

**Passage:** Proverbs 1; Review Matthew 13-15

1. What is the “beginning of knowledge” according to verse 7? How is that contrasted with the way that fools react to instruction? Are you “wise,” or are you a fool? Why or why not?

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2. How are the “simple” killed, according to verse 32? What does that tell you about the way that you should live your Christian life?

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3. Pick one parable out of Matthew 13 that really impacted your thinking. Explain how you will apply its truths to your life this week.

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4. According to all of the examples in verses 13-36 in Matthew 14, what’s the key to successful Christian living? How is your faith?

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5. Jesus does many things in Matthew 15. Review the chapter and record what action of His impacts you the most as you consider His example.

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**Date:** Sunday, April 28

**Passage:** Proverbs 2; Review Matthew 16-17

1. Who alone is responsible for giving out wisdom (v. 6)?  
So who should you go to when you need wisdom? When  
was the last time that you asked God for wisdom?

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2. Describe the forbidden woman as she is revealed in verses 16-19.  
Scary, huh? Avoid her this week!

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3. What will happen to the upright person (v. 21)? What will happen to  
the wicked (v. 22)? Which one are you right now?

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4. Review Matthew 16. What one principle from this chapter will you  
apply to your life in the coming week?

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5. Look at Matthew 17. How can you subject yourself to the  
government like Jesus did?

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Date: Monday, April 29

Passage: Matthew 18

1. Jesus beautifully pictures conversion like becoming a child. Just as children must trust for protection, comfort, and care, you have nothing to offer Jesus when you come to Him. You must come to Him and simply give Him your all. What are some areas in your life where you struggle to “become like a child” in your faith in God?

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2. Jesus’ point in verses 7-9 is that we should expect temptations to come from the world. When temptations come from the body of Christ, however, that is a totally different matter. Is there anyone that you’re causing to fall into sin through your lifestyle? Who? This is a serious issue!

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3. Describe the procedure for confronting sin in the body of Christ as it’s presented in verses 18-20. Do you think we do a good job of following this as Christians today? How so?

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4. What does Jesus expect from you when it comes to forgiveness? How are you doing when it comes to following it? What’s the punishment for the unforgiving person (vv. 34-35)?

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This is a convicting chapter in the book of Matthew. It has much to say about the way that we are to relate to others in the body of Christ. Stop right now and pray for grace to avoid tempting others (vv. 7-10), confront sin graciously (vv. 15-20), and practice Christian forgiveness (vv. 21-35).



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**Date:** Tuesday, April 30

**Passage:** Matthew 19

1. We live in a time where the sacred institution of marriage is not taken seriously at all. Summarize Jesus' teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage from Matthew 19:3-9. Is there ever an excuse for divorce? What might it be according to the text?

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2. Look at the way that Jesus treats the children that come His way in verses 13-15. When He says "for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven (v. 14)," He again refers to the grace and mercy offered by God to those who cannot help themselves. How can that encourage you today?

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3. Why did the rich young ruler leave Jesus without deciding to follow Him (vv. 21-22)? Can you identify with the way that He feels? Did you know that Jesus expects the same thing from you when it comes to following Him that He expected from this young man?

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4. Salvation, then, seems impossible! At least that's what the disciples thought (v. 25). But who is sovereign over salvation (v. 26)? Man, what a comfort!

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5. Jesus reiterates His call to discipleship (vv. 29-30). His is a call of total dedication. What are some things that might be tough for you to give up in order to follow Jesus? Are you willing to surrender them?

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**Date:** Tuesday, April 30

**Passage:** Matthew 19

1. We live in a time where the sacred institution of marriage is not taken seriously at all. Summarize Jesus' teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage from Matthew 19:3-9. Is there ever an excuse for divorce? What might it be according to the text?

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2. Look at the way that Jesus treats the children that come His way in verses 13-15. When He says "for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven (v. 14)," He again refers to the grace and mercy offered by God to those who cannot help themselves. How can that encourage you today?

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3. Why did the rich young ruler leave Jesus without deciding to follow Him (vv. 21-22)? Can you identify with the way that He feels? Did you know that Jesus expects the same thing from you when it comes to following Him that He expected from this young man?

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4. Salvation, then, seems impossible! At least that's what the disciples thought (v. 25). But who is sovereign over salvation (v. 26)? Man, what a comfort!

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5. Jesus reiterates His call to discipleship (vv. 29-30). His is a call of total dedication. What are some things that might be tough for you to give up in order to follow Jesus? Are you willing to surrender them?

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**Date:** Wednesday, May 1

**Passage:** Matthew 20

1. Many people have stumbled over Jesus' parable in verses 1-16. His point is really quite simple. Everyone who accepts Him will receive the full benefits of the kingdom, regardless of how long they've been following Him. The thief on the cross is entitled to the same benefits as the one who has followed Jesus for 70 years. It's all of grace. What are some ways that this truth can impact your thinking when it comes to evangelism?

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2. Was the request of the disciples necessarily a bad one (vv. 20-28)? Why or why not? What can we learn about the request from Jesus' response in verse 28?

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3. When Jesus talks of "drinking His cup," He's referring to being a partaker in His sufferings. This isn't something we think about too much since we have it so easy here in 21<sup>st</sup> Century America. Would you be willing to partake in the sufferings of Christ? What would potentially stop you?

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4. What did the blind men do as soon as Jesus healed them (v. 34)? This should be the immediate response of all who have found healing in Jehovah! Are you following Him today? If you're saved, He's healed you!

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Date: Thursday, May 2

Passage: Matthew 21

1. Jesus' triumphal entry was necessary in order for Him to fulfill the prophecy of old. When the crowd shouted out "Hosanna!" they were acknowledging Him as the son of Messianic promise. They knew He was their king. What's one truth that is encouraging from this thought? As you think about what's about to happen to Jesus, what is sad about this scene?

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2. Why did Jesus become so indignant in the temple (v. 13)? What do His actions tell you about how seriously He took the matter of worship? How seriously do you take worship?

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3. Jesus' act of cursing the fig tree (vv. 18-22) illustrates God's judgment on Israel for rejecting Christ as the true Messiah. Think about the human emotion involved in Jesus' rejection. How do you think He felt? Similarly, how do you think He feels when you reject Him as the Lord of your life?

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4. There are two parables left in the conclusion of this chapter (vv. 28-32 & vv. 33-46). Pick one & explain it. Make application to your Christian living this week.

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**Date:** Friday, May 3  
**Passage:** Matthew 22

1. In the parable of the Wedding Feast, the man's lack of proper garments (v. 11), means that he had willfully rejected the invitation of the king & was unprepared. Jesus is using this parable to illustrate the fact that there are those who willfully reject His invitation. Have you accepted the invitation of your King? When?

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2. Again, Jesus focuses on the responsibility that His followers have to honor their government by illustrating His own submission (vv. 15-22). Why do you think it's so hard for Christians to respect their government? How should you respond to government, even when you disagree?

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3. The Sadducees tried to trick Jesus (vv. 23-33). They didn't really believe in a true resurrection after death, and they thought they could throw a wrench in Jesus' logic. Did they succeed? Why or why not?

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4. What are the two great commandments (vv. 34-39)? How are you doing at keeping the first one? What about the second?

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5. Jesus declared His deity in verses 41-45. Summarize His argument.

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**Date:** Saturday, May 4

**Passage:** Proverbs 3; Review Matthew 18-20

1. Who is a blessed person, according to verse 13? What does that tell you that you should spend your life pursuing?

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2. Proverbs 3:5-6 is one of the most beloved promises in the Bible. Why? What are some areas that you know that you need to trust God completely in?

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3. In Matthew 18, how should you respond to someone who asks for your forgiveness? Do you usually do that?

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4. Why did the rich man in Matthew 19 leave Jesus sorrowfully? How do the commands to follow Jesus impact your life?

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5. Consider Jesus' healing of the blind men in Matthew 20. Look at Jesus' compassion. What does His compassion towards the lost mean when you consider your own life?

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**Date:** Sunday, May 5

**Passage:** Proverbs 4; Review Matthew 21-22

1. In Proverbs 4, the father specifically admonishes his son to avoid the paths of the wicked (vv. 14-15). Think about your own life. What are some ways this week that you know you can avoid temptation?

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2. According to verse 23, what part of you functions as the spring of life? Is this the same, or different teaching from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7? How will you protect your heart this week?

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3. Consider the Triumphal Entry of Jesus in Matthew 21 one more time. What does the word "Hosanna" mean? Did the crowd really know what they were saying? Why or why not?

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4. Why should the parable of the wedding feast in Matthew 22 instigate you to share the gospel message with a lost and dying world?

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**Date:** Monday, May 6  
**Passage:** Matthew 23

1. Matthew 23 is a significant passage. Jesus offers seven “Woes” to the scribes and the Pharisees. In the chart below, chronicle which verses the 7 woes cover, and what the point of each woe is. I’ve illustrated the first one for you.

| Verses    | Point of the Woe   |
|-----------|--|
| vv. 13-14 | The scribes & Pharisees didn’t allow people to enter into the Kingdom. |
|           |  |
|           |  |
|           |  |
|           |  |
|           |  |
|           |  |

2. Jesus really reveals His feelings in this passage in an incredibly significant way. What’s His feeling toward Jerusalem (vv. 37-39)? Why does He feel this way (v. 39)?

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3. After reading Matthew 23, how would you respond to a critic who tells you that they doubt the love of Jesus?

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**Date:** Tuesday, May 7

**Passage:** Matthew 24

1. Jesus, as the Perfect Prophet, knew exactly what was going to happen to the Jew's beloved temple (vv. 1-2). In A.D. 70, His terrible prediction came true. If Jesus could forecast the temple's destruction with pinpoint precision, what does that tell you about His ability to control the events of your life?

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2. According to verses 3-14, what are some signs that you should be looking for as the end of time approaches?

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3. There is a time of great global catastrophe coming before Jesus returns (vv. 15-26). How should this impact your attitude towards global evangelism?

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4. This chapter is consumed with future events. List several applications of the truths taught in this chapter that should impact your life today:

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May God help us to live our lives in such a way that we will not be ashamed at the coming of the Lord. Pray for the grace to cry with a pure heart, *"Even so come Lord Jesus!"*



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**Date:** Wednesday, May 8

**Passage:** Matthew 25

1. The parable of the 10 Virgins (vv. 1-12) is given to highlight the importance of being ready for Christ's return. It could happen at any moment, and there are no second chances for the unprepared. What are some areas in your life that you would be ashamed of if Jesus came back for you today?

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2. The parable of the Talents (vv. 14-30) shows how tragic it is to waste opportunities to serve Jesus right now with what He's given to you. Are you using the talents that you have been given for the glory of Jesus? How so?

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3. As you reflect on the parable of the talents, what are some ways that you know you should be using your gifts for the Lord in ways that you are not currently using them?

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4. Spend some time thinking of the final judgment as it's spelled out in verses 31-46. Think about your life. Are you ready? Why or why not?

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The hope of the believer is rooted firmly in the return of Christ. This hope, however, can also serve to instigate a great amount of fear in the hearts of believers. If you are not currently preparing for the immanent return of Jesus, you have a right to look towards that day with great trepidation. How are you using your time for Him?



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**Date:** Thursday, May 9

**Passage:** Matthew 26

1. As you read the story of the woman who anointed Jesus (vv. 6-13), how do you think that you would have responded if you had seen this great display of sacrificial giving? What's so convicting about Jesus' response (vv. 10-13)?

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2. Judas had the best theological training that anyone could have ever had (he was with Jesus for 3 years), and yet he still betrayed Christ (vv. 14-16). What does that tell you about the importance of guarding your heart?

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3. Verses 26-29 mark the institution of the Lord's Supper (communion). What, according to this passage, does the Lord's Supper symbolize?

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4. Read the rest of this chapter (vv. 30-75) without interacting with any questions here. Simply spend some time in meditation on the attitudes, actions, and decisions made by Jesus and His disciples as he was lead to Calvary. Summarize your thoughts in a few brief words below.

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**Date:** Friday, May 10  
**Passage:** Matthew 27

This is as sobering of a chapter as you will read in the entire New Testament. There are several important episodes that are worthy of your consideration. Jesus is delivered to Pilate (vv. 1-2), Judas hangs himself (vv. 3-10), Jesus stands before Pilate (v. 11-14), the crowd chooses Barabbas (vv. 15-23), Pilate delivers Jesus to be crucified (vv. 24-26), Jesus is mocked (vv. 27-31), Jesus is killed & buried (vv. 32-60), the tomb is guarded (vv. 62-66). Consider each section and offer a meditation of a few words. Allow the glory & grief of the scenes to wash over your soul. **He did this all for you.**



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| Crowd Chooses Barabbas    |  |
| Pilate Delivers Jesus     |  |
| Jesus is Mocked           |  |
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| The Tomb is Guarded       |  |

|                           |  |
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**Date:** Saturday, May 11

**Passage:** Proverbs 5; Review Matthew 23-24

1. How are the lips of a “forbidden woman” described in verse 3? What’s her speech like? What is the end of this woman, however (vv. 4-6)?

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2. The author of this proverb commands his son to stay far away from this wicked woman (vv. 7-8). We must always seek to remove ourselves from the pathway to temptation. What are some ways that you can remove yourself from temptation today?

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3. Consider our study in Matthew 23 from this week. Of Jesus’ seven woes to the Pharisees, which one impacted you the most? How can you apply the truths learned from this chapter to your life this week?

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4. We do not know when Jesus will return (Matt. 24), but we do know that we must be waiting eagerly for His return. How can you be preparing yourself & waiting eagerly for the return of Christ in the coming week?

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**Date:** Sunday, May 12

**Passage:** Proverbs 6; Review Matthew 25-27

1. What happens to the person who lives a life of slothfulness (v. 11)? How should this warning impact the way that you live your life?

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2. Who does the person that commits adultery ultimately destroy (v. 32)?

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3. Consider the parable of the talents from Matthew 25 again. How will you resolve to use your gifts for the Lord this week?

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4. How should the fact that Judas had the best theological training of anyone and yet still betrayed Jesus (Matt. 26) serve as a warning for your own life?

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5. Consider the example of your Savior as He went to the crucifixion (Matt. 27). How did He act? What can you learn from His behavior?

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**Date:** Monday, May 13

**Passage:** Matthew 28

1. The resurrection of Jesus Christ should be celebrated in the life of the follower of Jesus Christ on a daily basis.

What was the immediate reaction of the people who saw the angel at the tomb (v. 4)? What was their reaction when they saw Jesus (v. 9)? The resurrection of Jesus produces heart-felt worship!

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2. How did the guards react (vv. 11-15)? Why do you think that they reacted this way? Notice the sad conclusion to this paragraph (v. 15) – *“This story has been spread among the Jews to this day.”*

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3. What was Jesus’ final command to His disciples as the book of Matthew closes (Matt. 28:19)? What was his reassurance to them as they seek to fulfill His command (v. 20)?

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4. How are you doing at fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ? Do you faithfully share the gospel? Why or Why not?

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*“The Great Commission is not an option to be considered. It is a command to be obeyed.” – Hudson Taylor*

By the grace of Christ, may God find us faithful in fulfilling the Great Commission in our communities today!



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