

A GUIDE TO

matthew

A 9 WEEK READING PLAN LOOKING INTO
THE LIFE OF JESUS ACCORDING TO MATTHEW



MALORY SMITH

WEEK 1

MATTHEW 1-4

Day 1	Matthew 1
Day 2	Matthew 2, Exodus 1:1-2:10
Day 3	Matthew 3
Day 4	Joshua 3-4
Day 5	Matthew 4
Day 6	Acts 7
Day 7	Rest & Reflect

Jesus and the old testament

Day 1

1. Who was Matthew?
2. What is a genealogy? Do you recognize any of the names in the genealogy? What do you know about them?
3. What group of people is Matthew writing to?
4. What was he trying to communicate? Why do we think Matthew put this genealogy here?
5. Where does it say Jesus came from?
6. What does Immanuel mean?



Day 2

1. Summarize what is happening.
2. How does Herod react to hearing about Jesus? Who else reacts the same way? Why do you think that is?
3. What Old Testament prophecies do you see? What is Matthew's goal in pointing these out?
4. What similarities do you see between Exodus 1-2 and Matthew 2?



Days 3-4

1. Summarize what is happening.
2. Who was John the Baptist? (read Luke 1 to learn more about him)
3. What is John the Baptist's main message?
4. We see our first interaction with a few people called the "Pharisees and Sadducees" in verse 7. We will see a lot more of them. What can you gather about them from verses 7-10?
5. How does John the Baptist describe Jesus? What was he expecting Jesus to be like?
6. Do you know what other event happened at the Jordan River? (Read Joshua 3-4)



Days 5-6

1. Summarize what is happening.
2. Who led Jesus to be tempted? For how long? Why could these factors be significant?
3. In what 3 ways does Satan try to tempt Jesus?
4. How does Jesus respond to this temptation?
5. What does verse 17 say is Jesus' main message He began to preach from that time on?



USE THESE QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. *The wise men were astrologers, so they spent a lot of their time studying the sky and the stars. We don't get a lot of details concerning how they knew the star they saw was the star that would lead them to the Messiah King, Jesus, but we know they were confident that it would. God spoke to them personally, in a way that they understood, using something they were familiar with and studied every day.*

Can you see how God has been using everyday things in your life to communicate to you the way He communicated to the wise men?

2. *Think about Mary and Joseph for a minute while you read Matthew 2. This was a terrifying time in their lives, but God protected them over and over.*

Where have you seen God in your suffering and troubles?

3. *John the Baptist and Jesus both call for repentance.*

What does it mean to repent? Why do we need to repent?

4. **How can you relate to Jesus in his temptation?
How are you encouraged by this?**

USE DAY 7 TO REST AND REFLECT. CATCH UP ON ANY READING YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED, THEN TAKE TIME TO REFLECT ON WHAT YOU READ THIS WEEK. PRAY ABOUT WHAT GOD MIGHT BE WANTING TO TELL YOU ABOUT HIMSELF AND LOOK FOR PARALLELS IN THE SCRIPTURES.

Day 1	<i>Matthew 5</i>
Day 2	<i>Galatians 3:1-9</i>
Day 3	<i>Matthew 6</i>
Day 4	<i>Galatians 3:10-14</i>
Day 5	<i>Matthew 7</i>
Day 6	<i>Galatians 3:15-29</i>
Day 7	<i>Rest & Reflect</i>

the *Sermon* on the mount

Day 1-2

1. Summarize what is happening.
2. Who is Jesus talking to?
3. What does Jesus mean when he talks about the “the Law”? How did He come to fulfill the Law?

Days 3-4

1. What does Jesus teach about prayer?
2. What do we learn about our new identity as citizens of God’s kingdom?
3. What does Jesus teach about how we are to treat our relationships with other people?
4. What does Jesus seem to think is valuable?

Days 5-6

1. What does Jesus seem to think about pride?
2. What do you think Matthew 7:15-19 means?
3. Read Matthew 7:24-27. What would be some examples of building your house on the sand?
4. Where do we see “God With Us”?
5. What do we learn about the Kingdom of Heaven?

USE THESE QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. **Which section in the Sermon on the Mount is the most convicting for you? Why?**

2. *Read Matthew 5:2-12. These “Beatitudes” are not a status to attain to, but rather these are descriptions of the kinds of people to whom Jesus first brought the kingdom (he never says we should be poor in spirit...) As Christians, our actions hopefully flow out of a place of knowing WE ARE ALREADY BLESSED, not in hopes that we will EARN God’s blessing!*

How can knowing this change us?

3. *Read Matthew 6:19-24 again. Think about where/on what you spend your time, your money, your thoughts, etc. Evaluate where you could be storing up your “treasure.”*

Is it on earth? Is it in heaven? If you’re a visual person, make some kind of chart/graph to open your eyes to where your resources are going and where grow in other areas!

4. **What thoughts does Matthew 6:25-34 evoke in you?**

5. *In many of these passages, Jesus blows the minds of his listeners by introducing new ideas. He says “You have heard it said...BUT I SAY TO YOU...”*

What, if anything, was the most surprising/mind-blowing thing that Jesus taught you?

6. **Do you have past experience of “building your house on sand” and watching it fall apart when the floods came? Have you experienced the firm foundation Jesus offers by “building your house” on him?**

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Day 1	<i>Matthew 8</i>
Day 2	<i>Psalm 107</i>
Day 3	<i>Matthew 9</i>
Day 4	<i>Hebrews 11</i>
Day 5	<i>Matthew 10</i>
Day 6	<i>Romans 12</i>
Day 7	<i>Rest & Reflect</i>

Jesus and people

Days 1-2

1. What is a centurion?
2. What do we learn about true faith from the centurion's story?
3. Jesus commanded the people to follow Him. What questions do you think they had?
4. Compare Matthew 8:23-27 to Psalm 107:23-32. This Psalm was written before Jesus was alive. Maybe the disciples knew this psalm. What do you think they were experiencing in this moment on the boat?
5. Think about this: His closest followers don't know the full truth of who He is and question this on the boat, but the demons know EXACTLY who He is and what He is here for. What does this mean to you? What does it tell us about Jesus' relationship with the evil one?

Days 3-4

1. How do you feel when you think of Jesus as an authority?
2. In Matthew 9:1-8, what do you learn about the importance of community?
3. What kind of reactions to Jesus do you see from the people around him? (Also think about what kind of people each reaction belongs to).

Days 5-6

1. This chapter is all about Christ giving direction to His closest followers and communicating to them what it is like to follow him. Read each of the following sections and pull out a theme or main idea for what awaits those who the Lord makes His disciples.

Matthew 10:1-4

Matthew 10:5-15

Matthew 10:16-25

Matthew 10:26-39

Matthew 10:40-42

2. Where do we see "God With Us"?
3. What do we learn about the kingdom of heaven?
4. What do we learn about God's character through Jesus in these chapters?

USE THESE QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. *Matthew the tax collector served the Romans, while Simon the zealot rebelled against the Romans and wanted them expelled from the land. Let's just say these two were VERY unlikely friends.*

Have you ever experienced the Lord bringing someone into your life who you didn't think you would get along with?

2. *Jesus is willing and able to heal the sick, give sight to blind, make clean the unclean, wake the sleeping, etc.*

Have you experienced His healing in your life? Is there something currently in your life that needs healed? Given sight? Pray to Him and ask for that thing. He is WILLING and ABLE.

3. *Jesus tells us that the harvest is plentiful and the laborers are few.*

Do you feel that the Lord has called you to work in His fields? If so, where does your labor go? Take some time to pray for the Lord to send out laborers, just like He commands us, or to give you a mission you feel passionate about!

4. **As you read Matthew 9:35 all the way through chapter 10, what strikes you? What do you feel like the Lord could be pointing out to you to encourage, convict, correct, or guide you?**

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Day 1	<i>Matthew 11</i>
Day 2	<i>Jonah 1</i>
Day 3	<i>Matthew 12</i>
Day 4	<i>Jonah 2:1-3:5</i>
Day 5	<i>Matthew 13</i>
Day 6	<i>Jonah 3:6-4:11</i>
Day 7	<i>Rest & Reflect</i>

the people's reaction

Days 1-2

1. What does John ask Jesus in verse 3? Why is this shocking?
2. What did John think Jesus would be like? (Remember chapter 3). What is Jesus actually like?
3. What do you think Matthew 11:16-19 means?
4. Why do you think Jesus ended his teachings in chapter 11 with the section about rest?

Days 3-4

1. Jesus has now said twice to the Pharisees, “I desire mercy, and not sacrifice” (Matthew 9:13 and 12:7). What do you think this means?
2. What is blasphemy of the Holy Spirit?
3. Why do you think the Pharisees hated Jesus so much?

Days 5-6

1. What is a parable? Why did Jesus use them while teaching?
2. Who is Jesus talking to?
3. Who is the farmer? What is the seed?
4. The parable of the sower is not about who gets saved, it’s about understanding and the challenges of comprehending the truth when we are broken people. Notice the soil is the same, but it’s the different environments that impact the seed. Explain what each of the following environments looks like and how it would affect someone’s faith:

Path

Rocky ground

Thorns

Good soil

5. Why do you think Jesus lets the “wheat” and the “weeds” grow together? Where do we see “God With Us”? What do we learn about the kingdom of heaven? What do we learn about God’s character through Jesus in these chapters?

USE THESE QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. How do you feel remembering that everyone born before the time of Jesus did not get to hear about God’s plan of rescue for Jesus or even the great works Jesus was doing while He was alive? (Matthew 11:20-24)
2. Do you see yourself in the Pharisees at all? Do you focus more on what you’re doing than who you’re doing it for? (Matthew 12:1-14)
3. Jesus tells us in Matthew 12:33-37 that a tree is known as a good or a bad tree by what kind of fruit it produces and that the mouth will speak what the heart is full of.

What are the contents of your thoughts and words? What is the majority of your time communicating?

4. We are not given an interpretation of the parable of the hidden treasure or of the parable of the pearl.

How do you interpret these and why?

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Day 1	Matthew 14
Day 2	Psalm 102
Day 3	Matthew 15
Day 4	Psalm 103
Day 5	Matthew 16
Day 6	Galatians 5:1-15
Day 7	Rest & Reflect

bread and faith

Days 1-2

1. When Jesus finds out that John the Baptist is dead, what does He do? Then what happens?
2. What other time does Jesus take bread, say a blessing, break it, and give it to His disciples? How are these events similar?
3. Read the story of Jesus and Peter walking on water a couple of times. You've probably heard it a lot, but how is it speaking to you this week?

Days 3-4

1. What were Jesus and his disciples accused of doing? What does Jesus have to say about this?
2. Do you agree that the mouth speaks what the heart is full of?
3. What do you know about the Canaanite people? What do you think it was like for this woman to approach Jesus the way she did?
4. Why do you think He doesn't answer the Canaanite woman at first?

Days 5-6

1. The sign of the sky is the same whether the weather is good or bad. How do you think they were able to tell the difference and what does this have to do with what Jesus is talking about?
2. Why do you think Jesus refuses to give a sign?
3. Peter confesses Jesus as Christ and then rebukes Him when He explains His plan to the disciples. What do you think Peter was thinking when he rebuked Jesus?
4. What does it mean to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Jesus?

Where do we see "God With Us"?

What do we learn about the kingdom of heaven?

What do we learn about God's character through Jesus in these chapters?

USE THESE QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. Ask Jesus to remind you about PEOPLE.

Who would He care about and notice that you don't? Listen for His instruction on what you can do. (Matthew 14:13-21)

2. Do you have religious "traditions" you follow, just because you think it is what you're supposed to do? How can you turn these man-made traditions into God-glorifying moments?

3. The disciples almost miss Jesus because they are so focused on what they don't have. They think Jesus is upset with them and can't hear Him properly. **Do you feel like you look at the world with a "scarcity mindset" (fixate on what you don't have) or an "abundance mindset" (grateful for what you have)? How does this affect you? (Matthew 16:5-12)**

4. Who do you say Jesus is?

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Day 1	<i>Matthew 17</i>
Day 2	<i>Luke 9:28-36</i>
Day 3	<i>Matthew 18</i>
Day 4	<i>Ephesians 4</i>
Day 5	<i>Matthew 19</i>
Day 6	<i>Ephesians 2:1-10</i>
Day 7	<i>Rest & Reflect</i>

Christ-centered community disciplines

Days 1-2

1. Compare Matthew 17 to Luke 9:28-36. Did you learn any extra information?
2. Why do you think Jesus only took 3 disciples with Him?
3. What was the disciples' reaction when they saw Jesus' glory? What about when they heard God's voice? How does Jesus respond to them?
4. Compare Matthew 17:14-20 to Mark 9:14-29. Did you learn any extra information? What's the point of this story?
5. Jesus paid the tax even though He didn't have to. What could Jesus be teaching us through Matthew 17:24-26?

Days 3-4

1. What does it mean to have child-like faith?
2. Who do you think is Jesus talking about when He refers to "these little ones"?
3. What steps has Jesus laid out for confronting conflict? Why do you think these steps are necessary?
4. What do we learn about what the kingdom of heaven is like in Matthew 18:23?

Days 5-6

1. What is God's idea of marriage?
2. How did the rich young man think he could inherit eternal life? How did he view himself?
3. How did he respond to Jesus' invitation to follow him?
4. How does this passage say people are saved?
Where do we see "God With Us"?
What do we learn about God's character through Jesus in these chapters?

USE THESE QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. *Peter often lets his mouth get ahead of him.*

Can you relate to Peter's uncertainty of how to respond to God's glory around you? Do you take time to think about how truly glorious our God is? Take some time to praise Him! (Matthew 17:1-8)

2. **How do your character flaws hurt other people? It's important to recognize how we do this so we don't cause others to sin! (Matthew 18:7-9)**
3. **How do you tend to process conflict?**
4. **Are there any people you need to forgive that you haven't yet, even if they haven't asked for it? (Matthew 18:21-25)**
5. **Do you think Jesus intends us all to sell all we have to gain eternal life? What could this mean for you?**

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Day 1	<i>Matthew 20</i>
Day 2	<i>Phillipians 2:1-18</i>
Day 3	<i>Matthew 21</i>
Day 4	<i>Zech 9:9-16 & Lev 23:40</i>
Day 5	<i>Matthew 22</i>
Day 6	<i>Ephesians 5:1-21</i>
Day 7	<i>Rest & Reflect</i>

Jesus goes public

Days 1-2

1. What do you think is the purpose of the parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard?
2. What characteristics does the “master of the house” portray about God?
3. Who were the sons of Zebedee? What did their mother want for them?
4. What were their motives?
5. What was the cup Jesus was talking about? How would they eventually “drink from it”?

Days 3-4

1. What was the response of the crowd to Jesus entering Jerusalem on the donkey? What does Hosanna mean?
2. What did riding into a city on a donkey symbolize?
3. Use the Bible app to look up verse 10 in different translations. The NIV and ESV says Jerusalem was “stirred up.” What other phrases are used in its place? Why do you think they felt this way?
4. Where was the first place Jesus went when He entered Jerusalem? What did He do there?
5. What do you think is the purpose of Jesus cursing the fig tree?
6. Who do all the people in the parable of the tenants represent (master, servants, tenants, son)? What is the purpose of this parable?



Days 5-6

1. What does it mean that the kingdom is like a wedding feast?
2. What excuses did the people who declined the invitation make?
3. What kind of person is represented by the man who dressed differently?
4. How does everyone respond to the answers Jesus gives in this chapter? Where do we see “God With Us?” What is the kingdom of heaven like?

USE THESE QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. **Do you ever compare yourself with others? In what ways do you compare yourself? How does this affect you? (Matthew 20:1-16)**
2. **Do you ever feel God has been unfair to you? What does this parable teach you about this? (Matthew 20:1-16)**
3. **Which of the two sons do you most relate to? Do you struggle to keep commitments that you make with the Lord? (Matthew 21:28-32)**
4. *Jesus says, “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s”.*

What does this mean to you?

USE DAY 7 TO REST AND REFLECT. CATCH UP ON ANY READING YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED, THEN TAKE TIME TO REFLECT ON WHAT YOU READ THIS WEEK. PRAY ABOUT WHAT GOD MIGHT BE WANTING TO TELL YOU ABOUT HIMSELF AND LOOK FOR PARALLELS IN THE SCRIPTURES.

Day 1	<i>Matthew 23</i>
Day 2	<i>2 Thess. 1</i>
Day 3	<i>Matthew 24</i>
Day 4	<i>2 Thess. 2</i>
Day 5	<i>Matthew 25</i>
Day 6	<i>2 Thess. 3</i>
Day 7	<i>Rest & Reflect</i>

Signs of the end of an age

Days 1-2

1. Who is Jesus talking to?
2. What does it mean that the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat?
3. Summarize each of the 7 woes.
4. Read Abel and Zechariah's stories: Genesis 4:1-8, 2 Chronicles 24:17-22. These two martyr's story's bookend the Hebrew Bible (Genesis-2 Chronicles). After reading those, what do you think Jesus is trying to tell the Pharisees?

Days 3-4

1. What two questions do the disciples ask?
2. What qualifications does Jesus give for someone to be saved? (v. 13)
3. Who knows when Jesus' second coming will be? Who doesn't?
4. What makes a faithful and wise servant?
5. How can we be ready?

Days 5-6

1. What made 5 of the virgins wise? What made 5 of them foolish?
2. Why didn't the wise share their oil?
3. According to what did the master give each man his talents?
4. What is a talent?
5. How did the master respond to the men who doubled their talents?
6. What did the man with one talent do? What does his response tell you about him?
7. Why do you think the master was so angry with him?
8. Who do the sheep and the goats represent?
Where do we see "God With Us"?
What is the kingdom of heaven like?

USE THESE QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. How can we tell the difference between a false teacher and a genuine spiritual leader?
2. What do you learn about your own pride from chapter 23? What do you learn about humility?
3. Are you prone to fear and speculation of the future?
4. Are you utilizing the skills God has given to you to advance His kingdom, or do you feel like you're sitting on top of what He has given you, afraid to waste it?

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Day 1	<i>Matthew 26</i>
Day 2	<i>Psalms 22</i>
Day 3	<i>Matthew 27</i>
Day 4	<i>Isaiah 53</i>
Day 5	<i>Matthew 28</i>
Day 6	<i>1 Corinthians 15</i>
Day 7	<i>Rest & Reflect</i>

Leath and resurrection

Days 1-2

1. How much money did Judas betray Jesus for? How much is that worth today?
2. What is Passover? What is the significance that Jesus' death happens the day after the Passover feast?
3. What did Jesus pray for in Gethsemane? How many times?
4. What was His posture? Read the following Old Testament prophecies.

Psalms 41:9

Psalms 22:7-8

Psalms 22:14-15

Isaiah 53:10

Days 3-4

1. What was the fate of Judas?
2. What crimes was Jesus accused of? (Luke 23:2)
3. What is "gall" (v. 34)? Why do you think Jesus would not drink it?
4. List all the ways Jesus was tortured.
5. What is the significance of the curtain of the temple being torn in two, from top to bottom?

Days 5-6

1. Who were the first witnesses to Jesus' resurrection?
2. What story has been spread among the Jews to this day?
3. Why is it so important that Jesus was raised from the dead and that the story didn't stop after the cross? (read 1 Corinthians 15 to hear what Paul has to say about it)

USE THESE QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. *All of the disciples vowed to never deny Jesus, but we don't see any of them try to defend Him. Have you ever been given the opportunity to defend your faith, but you denied Him instead?*
2. *If you don't know much about Barabbas, Google him and read what he was known for. The crowd chose Barabbas over Jesus. Jesus took his place. What do you think Barabbas' reaction was to this? How does this story relate to how Jesus took your place?*
3. **How have you been affected by this story in your life?**
4. *Christ's resurrection gives us hope for the future! Spend some time in prayer thanking Him for what He has done and what He will continue to do!*

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