



AS IT IS  
IN HEAVEN

MATTHEW 3-7

COMMUNITY  
GROUP STUDIES

# AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

As we start the new year, we're going to spend some time walking with Jesus at the start of his ministry, and sit before some of his most profound teaching. We'll hear the life-giving and life-changing message of his gospel, and how it turns our world on its head.

As we work through Matthew, we will see four questions that keep appearing from the text. These symbols will also be popping up throughout these studies:

**How does this passage help us understand who God's people are?** Matthew is the most Jewish-focused of the four gospels. Many Jewish people at the time thought that they were God's people because of their genetic line, or because they followed the law. Jesus gives them a rude awakening: God's people are God's people through faith in Jesus, not through genetics or law-following.



**How is this fulfilling the words of the Old Testament?**

Again, because this is the most Jewish Gospel, there's a particular emphasis on how Jesus' birth, life, teaching, death and resurrection fulfil the Old Testament writings.



**How is this passage calling us to repentance?** Instead of law-following being the way to life, we hear again and again that faith and repentance are the way to life.



**How is this passage calling us to faith?** Because God's law demands that we are perfect, and none of us can live up to the demands of the law on our own, we need to trust in Jesus' death to atone for our sin, and in his perfect righteousness to make us righteous.



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WEEK ONE



HEAVEN HAS  
COME NEAR

MATTHEW 3

**3:1** In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea 2 and saying, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!" 3 For he is the one spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, who said: A voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way for the Lord; make his paths straight!

4 Now John had a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then people from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the vicinity of the Jordan were going out to him, 6 and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. 7 When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance. 9 And don't presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. 10 The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

11 "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I. I am not worthy to remove his sandals. He himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn. But the chaff he will burn with fire that never goes out." 13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. 14 But John tried to stop him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me?" 15 Jesus answered him, "Allow it for now, because this is the way for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then John allowed him to be baptized. 16 When Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water. The heavens suddenly opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased."

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# STUDY QUESTIONS



## DISCOVER

What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand?

Have a skim through Matthew 1-2. What are some key things that happen in those chapters?

### Read Matthew 3.

What does it mean for the kingdom of heaven to have come near?

One of the key words in this passage is *repentance*. What do we learn about repentance in:



Verse 2	
Verse 8	
Verse 11	

What do verses 7-10 teach us about who God's people are?



What do you think Jesus's words mean in verse 15?

Why do you think Jesus insisted on being baptised, given that he was already pure and without sin?

In verses 16-17, three different miraculous things happen in quick succession. What are they, and what do you think the significance of each is:

<b>Miraculous event 1:</b>	Significance:
<b>Miraculous event 2:</b>	Significance:
<b>Miraculous event 3:</b>	Significance:



## **NURTURE**

**What do you love in this passage? How can we see God's character here?**

How does verse 2 speak to you when God feels far away?

In Romans 6:3-4, we read that by faith, we join in Christ's baptism. How does it encourage you to hear that, by faith, Matthew 3:16-17 aren't just Jesus' story, but your story?



## **ACT**

**How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?**

"The kingdom of heaven is near!" How do these words motivate you to repent right now?

Are there any ways that you tend to lean on your own religion or relationships to try to earn your salvation?



WEEK TWO



# TEMPTATIONS

MATTHEW 4:1-11



**4:1** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 After he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 Then the tempter approached him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." 4 He answered, "It is written: Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: He will give his angels orders concerning you, and they will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

7 Jesus told him, "It is also written: Do not test the Lord your God." 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 And he said to him, "I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus told him, "Go away, Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him." 11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and began to serve him.

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# STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Matthew 4:1-11.



## DISCOVER

**What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand?**

Why does the Spirit lead Jesus to the wilderness?

Why does Satan tempt Jesus in these three ways?

Form of temptation	Why does Satan tempt Jesus with this?
Verses 2-4:	
Verses 5-7:	
Verses 8-10:	

Read Deuteronomy 8:1-10. How might this passage help us to understand Jesus' temptation?



## NURTURE

**What do you love in this passage? How can we see God's character here?**

Satan tempts Jesus with what Jesus already owns, but Satan doesn't own. Can you see this in your own life, of your temptations never giving you what they promise?

When are you most tempted to doubt God's word?

Have you ever had seasons of wilderness in your life (feeling acute loneliness, feeling distant from God, feeling lost in life). How did that season affect your faith?

How are you most tempted to sin when you're in those seasons of wilderness?



CT

**How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?**

How can you be more intentional about being aware of the times when a sense of wilderness leads you to sin? What can you do to avoid those places, or to make sure that you have support when you're in those places?

Hebrews 2:18 says that: "Since Jesus suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted." How does this help you when you are tempted? How can this shape your prayers for each other?

WEEK THREE



# FOLLOW ME

MATTHEW 4:12-25

**4:12** When he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. 13 He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. 14 This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: 15 Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, along the road by the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. 16 The people who live in darkness have seen a great light, and for those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned.

17 From then on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near." 18 As he was walking along the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter), and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. 19 "Follow me," he told them, "and I will make you fish for people." 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him.

21 Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with Zebedee their father, preparing their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. 23 Now Jesus began to go all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. 24 Then the news about him spread throughout Syria. So they brought to him all those who were afflicted, those suffering from various diseases and intense pains, the demon-possessed, the epileptics, and the paralytics. And he healed them. 25 Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.



# STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Matthew 4:12-25.



## DISCOVER

What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand?

This passage combines Isaiah 9:1-2 and Isaiah 42:7. What do these quotes from Isaiah teach us about Jesus' ministry?

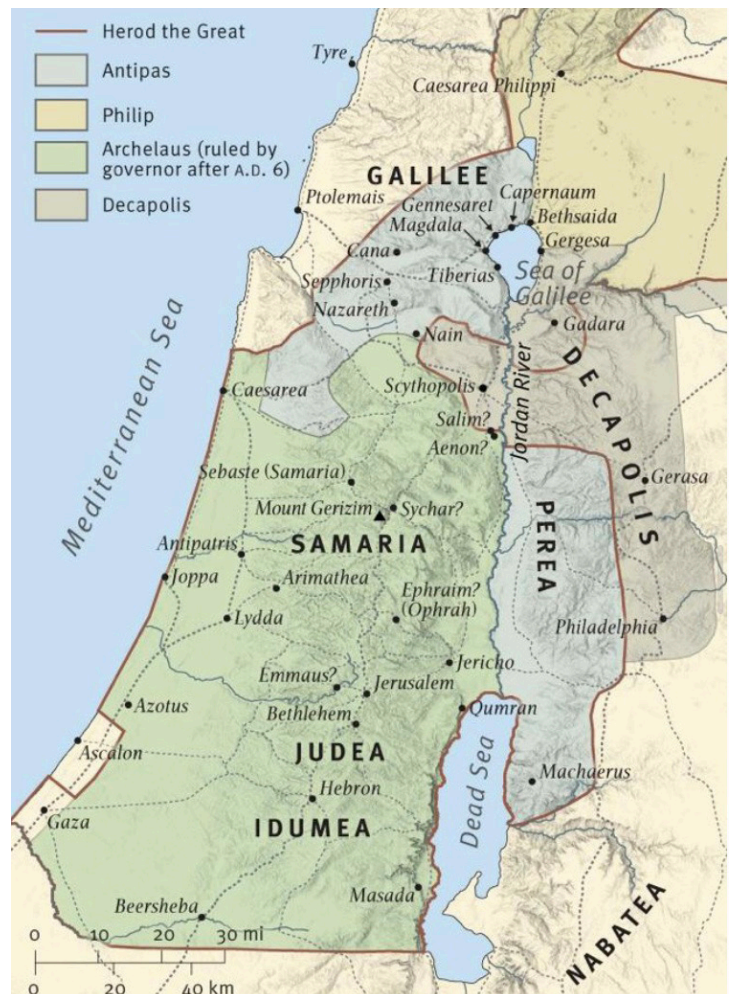


What does Jesus call his first disciples to do?



Jesus' message (4:17) is the same as John's (3:2). Do you think that Jesus meant this message in a different or fuller sense than John?

There are a lot of different place names in this passage. Looking at the map on the right, trace where everything happens:





Matthew 4:23–24 summarises Jesus' ministry. What are the three main things that Jesus does? How do they each show us that the kingdom of heaven is at hand?



### **NURTURE**

**What do you love in this passage? How can we see God's character here?**

What does it mean for you to "follow Jesus"?

What does it mean for you to be a "fisher of people"?

How are you most longing for the kingdom of heaven at the moment?



### **ACT**

**How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?**

Is there anything holding you back from following Jesus whole-heartedly?

How can you pray for those in your life who don't know Jesus now?

WEEK FOUR



TRUE  
SPIRITUALITY

MATTHEW 5:1-16

**5:1** When he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 Then he began to teach them, saying: 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 Blessed are the humble, for they will inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

11 "You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of me. 12 Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you. 13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt should lose its taste, how can it be made salty? It's no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

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



### **DISCOVER**

**What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand?**

This is the start of the Sermon on the Mount, one of the most famous teachings in world history, which will go from chapters 5-7. So in this passage, who is Jesus speaking to?

For such a beloved sermon, it starts in quite an odd way--with a series of poetic reversals of common thought. Why do you think that Jesus starts like this?

Looking at all of Jesus' descriptors of the "blessed", what kind of a person do you picture?

How might these words be an articulation of Jesus' time in the wilderness?



### **NURTURE**

**What do you love in this passage? How can we see God's character here?**

When have you felt the most "poor in spirit," "mournful"? Have you felt blessed in those times?

These words seem to be saying that physical blessings aren't necessarily a sign of God's blessing. Where are you the most tempted to think that physical blessings are a sign of God's blessing?



CT

**How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?**

In verses 13-16, Jesus calls his followers to be noticeably different to those around them. How do these words confront you right now?

Can you think of anyone who is struggling to feel blessed, whilst in any of the situations that Jesus names? How can you be a blessing to them this week?

Pick one of the following that you want to grow in this year: "hunger and thirst for righteousness", "merciful", "pure in heart", "peacemaker." How can you be working towards that, and how do you need prayer for that? Spend some time praying for those things now.

WEEK FIVE



FAITH AND  
FULFILMENT

MATTHEW 5:17-48



**5:17** “Don’t think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or one stroke of a letter will pass away from the law until all things are accomplished. 19 Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever does and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.

21 “You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, Do not murder, and whoever murders will be subject to judgment. 22 But I tell you, everyone who is angry with his brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Whoever insults his brother or sister will be subject to the court. Whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be subject to hellfire. 23 So if you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Reach a settlement quickly with your adversary while you’re on the way with him to the court, or your adversary will hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you will be thrown into prison. 26 Truly I tell you, you will never get out of there until you have paid the last penny.

27 “You have heard that it was said, Do not commit adultery. 28 But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. 31 “It was also said, Whoever divorces his wife must give her a written notice of divorce. 32 But I tell you, everyone who divorces his wife, except in a case of sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery. And whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. 33 “Again, you have heard that it was said to our ancestors, You must not break your oath, but you must keep your oaths to the Lord. 34 But I tell you, don’t take an oath at all: either by heaven, because it is God’s throne; 35 or by the earth, because it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. 36 Do not swear by your head, because you cannot make a single hair white or black. 37 But let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything more than this is from the evil one. 38 “You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. 39 But I tell you, don’t resist an evildoer. On the contrary, if anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 As for the one who wants to sue you and take away your shirt, let him have your coat as well. 41 And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and don’t turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

43 “You have heard that it was said, Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don’t even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary? Don’t even the Gentiles do the same? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

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# STUDY QUESTIONS

**Read Matthew 5:17-48.**



## DISCOVER

**What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand?**

One of the key words in Matthew is "righteousness." Look back and read 3:15, 5:6, 5:10. How do these verses help you understand Jesus' words in 5:20?

Jesus is standing on the mountain, interpreting the law for the people, like the new Moses. How do you think verses 17-20 help us to better understand the purpose of the Old Testament law?



This entire section seems to be addressed to those who have misunderstood the purpose of the Old Testament law. The purpose was never to keep it perfectly, and achieve righteousness, but to show us our need for Christ, and for his forgiveness and grace. How does this help us to understand this passage?



## NURTURE

**What do you love in this passage? How can we see God's character here?**

Do you more tend towards being dejected in your failures, or proud in your goodness?

Three of Jesus' applications are towards righteousness in anger (v. 22-25), in lust (v. 28-30), and with honesty (v. 34-37). Which of these three do you need to feel the weight of right now?



**CT**

**How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?**

Following on from how you answered the last question: How can you be making steps to be seeking out someone to forgive them, taking steps to live in purity, or taking steps to be faithful to your word?

More so than any of the above though, this passage is pushing us towards the realisation that we can never achieve righteousness on our own, and we need to trust in Jesus. How does this passage help you become aware of your self-reliance? How can you be praying for trust in Jesus in that?

WEEK SIX



SECRET  
GENEROSITY

MATTHEW 6:1-4

**6:1** "Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. Otherwise, you have no reward with your Father in heaven.

2 So whenever you give to the poor, don't sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be applauded by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward.

3 But when you give to the poor, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

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# STUDY QUESTIONS

**Read Matthew 6:1-4.**

**D ISCOVER**  
**What's interesting here? What do you learn?**  
**What don't you understand?**

What are attitudes towards generosity that this passage is trying to correct?

What reward does Jesus say that we'll get if we:

Give well (verse 4):



Give in the wrong way (verse 2b):

**N URTURE**  
**What do you love in this passage? How can we**  
**see God's character here?**

When are you the most tempted to look good for the approval of others?



How secretive do you think Jesus is commanding us to be with our generosity? In verse 3, he uses the illustration of our left hand not knowing what our right hand is doing. But practically, who do you think it's okay to talk about generosity to (if anyone)?



CT

**How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?**

Giving money directly to those in need isn't always the way to help them (sometimes it can even be unhelpful for them). What are some ways that you can be thoughtfully seeking to care for the disadvantaged in your community?

How can you as a group be seeking to work together in this, whilst also acknowledging Jesus' words about humility and secrecy?

WEEK SEVEN



OUR FATHER  
IN HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:5-18

6:5 "Whenever you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward. 6 But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. 7 When you pray, don't babble like the Gentiles, since they imagine they'll be heard for their many words. 8 Don't be like them, because your Father knows the things you need before you ask him.

9 "Therefore, you should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, your name be honored as holy. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. 14 "For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well. 15 But if you don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your offenses. 16 "Whenever you fast, don't be gloomy like the hypocrites. For they disfigure their faces so that their fasting is obvious to people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that your fasting isn't obvious to others but to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

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# STUDY QUESTIONS

**Read Matthew 6:5-18.**



## DISCOVER

**What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand?**

When you picture a "righteous person", what do they look like?



What are some ways to pray that Jesus is seeking to correct?

Why is praying in secret a good thing? What's the place for praying with others, then?



## NURTURE

**What do you love in this passage? How can we see God's character here?**

For every line in verses 9-13, write another line to make the prayer personal and specific to you:

Our Father in heaven

---

Your name be honoured as holy

---

Your kingdom come

---

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven

---

Give us today our daily bread

---

Forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors.

---

Do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

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**CT**

**How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?**

How can Jesus' example help shape your prayers this week?

What's one line from Jesus' example prayer that you'd like prayer for this week?

WEEK EIGHT



TREASURES  
IN HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:19-34



**6:19** “Don’t store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don’t break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. So if the light within you is darkness, how deep is that darkness! 24 “No one can serve two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

25 “Therefore I tell you: Don’t worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn’t life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 Consider the birds of the sky: They don’t sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you worth more than they? 27 Can any of you add one moment to his life span by worrying? 28 And why do you worry about clothes? Observe how the wildflowers of the field grow: They don’t labor or spin thread. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these. 30 If that’s how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, won’t he do much more for you—you of little faith? 31 So don’t worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ 32 For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you. 34 Therefore don’t worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

**Read Matthew 6:19-34.**



### **DISCOVER**

**What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand?**

Jesus continues addressing the theme of how we should relate to the physical--particularly, money and possessions. In one sentence, how would you sum up Jesus' teaching about money and possessions?

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What are the different issues that Jesus is addressing here?

What is "treasure in heaven"?



### **NURTURE**

**What do you love in this passage? How can we see God's character here?**

What's your dream of the best life for yourself? Where does it point towards for your treasure?

What kind of worry is this passage speaking into? Do you struggle with Jesus' answer to it?

How can birds and flowers be a comfort to us?

Where does your heart most gravitate towards money or possessions, so as to draw your mind and heart away from thoughts of God?



CT

**How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?**

Thinking back throughout the past week, in what directions have you most casually spent your time and money? What does this tell you about where your treasure is?

How can you be asking God to help you "seek his kingdom and his righteousness" this week?

WEEK NINE



KINGDOM  
RELATIONSHIPS

MATTHEW 7:1-12

**7:1** "Do not judge, so that you won't be judged. 2 For you will be judged by the same standard with which you judge others, and you will be measured by the same measure you use. 3 Why do you look at the splinter in your brother's eye but don't notice the beam of wood in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the splinter out of your eye,' and look, there's a beam of wood in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First take the beam of wood out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take the splinter out of your brother's eye. 6 Don't give what is holy to dogs or toss your pearls before pigs, or they will trample them under their feet, turn, and tear you to pieces.

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. 9 Who among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 11 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him. 12 Therefore, whatever you want others to do for you, do also the same for them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

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

**D ISCOVER**  
**What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand?**

Verse 1 is one of the most quoted, and most misunderstood, verses in the Bible. What kind of judgmentalism is Jesus commanding us against?

How does verse 6 relate to verses 1-5?

What do you think that we're asking for, seeking, finding, and receiving in this passage?



How do you think that verse 12 is a summation of the entire Law and Prophets?

**N URTURE**  
**What do you love in this passage? How can we see God's character here?**

How do we keep from becoming overly critical, and hypocritical, towards others?



Often, we are the most critical where we are the most insecure ourselves. Do you think that this is true for you?

How might verses 7-11 change your prayers?



CT

**How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?**

Where are you quick to criticise, but slow to understand?

Here's a helpful quote from John Stott:

*"We need to be as critical of ourselves as we often are of others, and as generous to others as we always are to ourselves."*

How do you need to ask God for help in this?

WEEK TEN



ENTERING THE  
**KINGDOM**

MATTHEW 7:13-28

**7:13** "Enter through the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who go through it. 14 How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it. 15 "Be on your guard against false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves. 16 You'll recognize them by their fruit. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17 In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit. 18 A good tree can't produce bad fruit; neither can a bad tree produce good fruit. 19 Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 So you'll recognize them by their fruit.

21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, drive out demons in your name, and do many miracles in your name?' 23 Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you law-breakers!'

24 "Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain fell, the rivers rose, and the winds blew and pounded that house. Yet it didn't collapse, because its foundation was on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and doesn't act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 The rain fell, the rivers rose, the winds blew and pounded that house, and it collapsed. It collapsed with a great crash." 28 When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, 29 because he was teaching them like one who had authority, and not like their scribes.

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# STUDY QUESTIONS

**Read Matthew 7:13-28.**

**D ISCOVER**  
**What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand?**

How would you summarise Jesus' teaching in this passage, in one sentence?

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What's this passage warning us against?

What do you think the good fruit is, from verses 16-19?



What's lacking in the people Jesus rejects, in verses 21-23?



**N URTURE**  
**What do you love in this passage? How can we see God's character here?**

Do you find any parts of this passage personally confronting?

What do you think verses 24-27 might look like for people in real life, for the life built on the rock, and the life built on the sand?

Where have you experienced the "narrow gate" aspect of following Jesus?



**CT**

**How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?**

The application of this passage is "act on my words" (verse 24). What are a couple of practical takeaways that you want to take away from Matthew 5-7, that you want to act on?

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