

*growing  
together*

GROUP GUIDE

WALK IN GRACE MATTHEW 1-7  
FOR WELL-WATERED WOMEN

“IF THERE IS SO MUCH *blessing* AND JOY EVEN IN A SINGLE ENCOUNTER  
OF BROTHER WITH BROTHER, HOW *inexhaustible* ARE THE RICHES THAT  
OPEN UP FOR THOSE WHO *by God's will* ARE PRIVILEGED TO LIVE IN THE  
DAILY FELLOWSHIP OF LIFE WITH *other Christians!*”

—DIETRICH BONHOEFFER, *LIFE TOGETHER*

Last Spring I felt the ache for something more. I peered around the recesses of my heart and sought out idols—usually when I have a constant longing for more, it means that I’ve elevated my love or need of something above my need for God. But what I found wasn’t an idol; it was an ache. I was lonely, but it wasn’t simply friendship I missed. It was fellowship with other women digging deeply into the Word of God together.

Of course, in today’s circumstances, this was not an easy ache to fill. But instead of ignoring it, I got creative. What if I could study God’s Word not through a church-sponsored Bible study, but with a couple of other women meeting in the home of a friend? I asked around, and as restrictions eased, we were able to meet together weekly, early one morning before any of our kids woke up. What a difference it made! Instead of complaining about how everything was different, we gathered around the one thing that always remains the same—God and his Word. On the firm foundation of his unchangeability, we found a sure footing for friendship in a difficult season.

God made us to live in fellowship with each other. The local church plays an essential role in that fellowship, but as a body of believers, we are the living church. If your church isn’t large enough for women’s programming or is not open in this season, you can still walk in community with women in your local context.

This guide aims to help you root yourself deeply in God’s Word by studying alongside another woman. All you will each need to know exactly how your meetings will work is a copy of the Walk in Grace Matthew 1-7 Journal and this document. I know it can feel awkward—the fear of her “no” may keep you from reaching out—but God has created us for fellowship. We are not meant to do this alone. If you can muster up the bravery to simply ask one other woman, that’s all that is required.

Once you’ve found one (or five or ten!) other women who want to study God’s Word with you, encourage each woman to print out this guide for your time together. You don’t have to be the leader—no one does. The guide will lay out what questions to discuss during your time together and also prompt you in prayer for one another. If you want to take it a step further each week and have a time of specific prayer requests, feel free to do so. Each meeting can be completed in 30-45 minutes depending on how many women are meeting together, creating the opportunity for moms with kids to meet while their kids play or for working women to meet during lunch.

If you’ve felt lonely or adrift without the usual experience of church this past year, it’s time to do something about it. Take a moment and pray—who does God want you to ask to study his Word together? I’m so excited for you. I know that every time I open up God’s Word with another woman, our friendship grows as we grow closer to God.

*always growing. Maggie*

# *ideas for meeting together*

1. MEET ON FRIDAY AFTERNOONS AT A COFFEE SHOP WHEN MANY PEOPLE FINISH WORK EARLY

2. MEET ON YOUR OWN TIME USING A MESSAGING APP SO EVERYONE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE TOGETHER AT THE SAME TIME

3. MEET IN THE MORNING AT A FRIEND'S HOUSE

4. MEET AT A LOCAL PARK AND LET YOUR KIDS PLAY TOGETHER AS YOU OPEN GOD'S WORD

5. MEET ONLINE

6. MEET ON SATURDAYS OR SUNDAYS WHEN WORK ISN'T A HINDRANCE OR HUSBANDS ARE AVAILABLE TO WATCH KIDS

# week one

## PRAYER

Have one woman open in prayer using the prayer she wrote in the Be Still and Know section on week 1, day 3.

## DISCUSS

**Day 1:** Share any initial observations or questions you had.

**Day 2:** Who is the author? What other name was he known by (see Mark 2:14 and Luke 5:27)? To whom was he writing?

**Day 3:** What does it mean that the book of Matthew is a “Gospel”?

**Day 4:** What repeated words did you circle in Matthew 1-7? Each woman can share one theme she has noticed from Matthew 1-7.

**Day 5:** Share your outline with each other, remembering there are no wrong answers. Share your summaries.

Share something you learned about God or the gospel this week. Share how you can apply that truth to your life.

## PRAY MATTHEW 5:11-12 FOR EACH OTHER:

Blessed is [ ] when others revile her and persecute her and utter all kinds of evil against her falsely on God’s account. Let [ ] rejoice and be glad, for her reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before her.

# week two

## PRAYER

Have one woman open in prayer using the prayer she wrote in the Be Still and Know section on week 2, day 3.

## DISCUSS

**Day 1:** In what way does Matthew's account begin differently than the other three Gospels?

**Day 2:** What is notable about Joseph's actions and responses throughout this passage?

**Day 3:** How does this account differ from how the Christmas story is often retold?

**Day 4:** How does this piece of Jesus' family history mirror the history of the nation of Israel, especially regarding Egypt and deliverance?

**Day 5:** How does the reputation of Jesus' hometown reveal a King who stooped low to become like us?

Share your summaries.

Share something you learned about God or the gospel this week. Share how you can apply that truth to your life.

## PRAY MATTHEW 5:16 FOR EACH OTHER:

Let [ ]'s light shine before others, so that they may see her good works and give glory to our Father who is in heaven.



# week three

## PRAYER

Have one woman open in prayer using the prayer she wrote in the Be Still and Know section on week 3, day 3.

## DISCUSS

**Day 1:** Compare today's passage to Malachi 4:5–6. What is John the Baptist's role as the "second Elijah"? What is his message? Why is he baptizing Jews (vs. 5–6), and what does this baptism signify?

**Day 2:** Why would Jesus, who is sinless, be baptized by John, who was baptizing "for repentance" (v. 11)? How is Jesus our representative and our example, even in his baptism? What greater reality does baptism point to?

**Day 3:** Summarize the three ways Jesus is tempted. How do these temptations relate to all of humanity (think of Adam in Genesis)?

**Day 4:** How does verse 17 mark the beginning of Jesus' ministry? Define the word "repent" and compare Matthew 3:2 and 4:17.

**Day 5:** What does the command "follow" mean here, and what are the implications? What does "me" mean here, and why is it important? What is the immediate cost of their obedience (v. 22)?

Share your summaries.

Share something you learned about God or the gospel this week. Share how you can apply that truth to your life.

## PRAY MATTHEW 6:19-21 FOR EACH OTHER:

May \_\_\_\_\_ not lay up for herself treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for herself treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where \_\_\_\_\_'s treasure is, there her heart will be also.

# week four

## PRAYER

Have one woman open in prayer using the prayer she wrote in the Be Still and Know section on week 4, day 3.

## DISCUSS

**Day 1:** How is the word “blessed” often defined? Look up “blessed” in a Bible dictionary and write out a simple definition and/or synonym. What does it mean to be “poor in spirit” and how could such a person be considered blessed? What is meekness (see verse 5 and Psalm 37:11)? What might it look like to “hunger and thirst for righteousness”?

**Day 2:** Define merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, and persecuted using a dictionary or concordance. How are these descriptors of the “blessed” different from what the world (and other religions) would call happy and blessed?

**Day 3:** What is “the Law” Jesus refers to in verses 17–18? What does it mean that Jesus fulfills the Law and Prophets rather than abolishing them? How is Jesus’ statement in verse 20 possible? (See 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Ephesians 2:8–9.)

**Day 4:** In what ways does Jesus connect murder with anger and adultery with lust? How does Jesus’ teaching go beyond outward actions to the deeper issues of the heart?

**Day 5:** How does verse 43 reveal a common misunderstanding of God’s Law, and what does Jesus command instead? Is Jesus’ command in verse 48 possible? If so, how?

Share your summaries. Share something you learned about God or the gospel this week. Share how you can apply that truth to your life.

## PRAY MATTHEW 6:31-33 FOR EACH OTHER:

Let [ ] not be anxious, saying “What will I eat?” or “What will I drink?” or “What will I wear?” For our heavenly Father knows that she needs all these things. But instead may [ ] seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to her.

# week five

## PRAYER

Have one woman open in prayer using the prayer she wrote in the Be Still and Know section on week 5, day 4.

## DISCUSS

**Day 1:** What might “practicing your righteousness before other people” have looked like in Jesus’ day? What does it look like today?

**Day 2:** Yesterday’s passage emphasized giving “in secret” and now Jesus encourages praying “in secret.” Explain the significance of that phrase and its meaning.

**Day 3:** What does Jesus communicate by addressing God as our Father (a familial term) in heaven (a reminder of his power and sovereignty)? What does it mean to ask for daily bread? Since God doesn’t tempt anyone to sin, how might we interpret verse 13?

**Day 4:** What does Jesus communicate by addressing God as our Father (a familial term) in heaven (a reminder of his power and sovereignty)? What does it mean to ask for daily bread? Since God doesn’t tempt anyone to sin, how might we interpret verse 13?

**Day 5:** Why does this section begin with “Therefore...” and how does the prior context of this passage help us understand what Jesus is teaching? Define “anxious.” What is Jesus communicating by using examples from his creation in this passage?

Share your summaries.

Share something you learned about God or the gospel this week. Share how you can apply that truth to your life.

## PRAY THE LORD’S PRAYER FROM MATTHEW 6:9-13 TOGETHER:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.



# week six

## PRAYER

Have one woman open in prayer using the prayer she wrote in the Be Still and Know section on week 6, day 1.

## DISCUSS

**Day 1:** Matthew 7:1 is often quoted on its own. When you read the broader context of verses 1–6, what is Jesus communicating about the act of judging? Is it ever right to pass judgment on others?

**Day 2:** What does Jesus communicate here about the character of God? How can this passage give you confidence as you pray?

**Day 3:** What does Jesus mean by saying of the Golden Rule in verse 12, “this is the Law and the Prophets”? How does this simple verse sum up the teachings of the Old Testament, and how is Christ the fulfillment? (Review Matthew 5:17.)

**Day 4:** How can we recognize teachers and prophets “by their fruits”? What bad fruit will a false prophet display? (See 2 Peter 2.) How is this passage an example of exercising right judgment (7:1–6)?

**Day 5:** What are examples of building one’s house on the sand? According to verses 28–29, why was Jesus’ teaching remarkable to his audience?

Share your summaries. Share something you learned about God or the gospel this week. Share how you can apply that truth to your life.

## PRAY MATTHEW 7:24–25 FOR EACH OTHER:

Let [ ] hear Jesus’ words and do them, so she may be like a wise woman who builds her house on the rock. When the rains fall, and the floods come, and the winds blow, [ ] will not fall, because she is steady on the rock—Jesus Christ, her Lord and Savior.