

*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 [redacted] when others revile her and persecute her and utter all kinds of evil against her falsely on God’s account. Let [redacted] 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 [redacted]'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 [redacted] 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, [redacted] will not fall, because she is steady on the rock—Jesus Christ, her Lord and Savior.

*growing
together*

GROUP GUIDE

WALK IN GRACE: MATTHEW 8-20
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 8–20 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, asking God to prepare your hearts and minds to learn from his Word.

DISCUSS

Day 1: Share any initial observations or questions you had about these chapters with the group.

Day 2: Review what you learned about the context of Matthew in your study of chapters 1–7. How has knowing more about the author and context changed the way you read this book?

Day 3: What repeated words or themes did you circle in Matthew 8–20?

Day 4: Have each person in the group share what theme(s) she has recognized this week in her repetitive reading of Matthew 8–20. How do these relate to the themes of Matthew 1–7?

Day 5: Share your outline of these 13 chapters with each other. (Remember, there are no wrong answers!)

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY PSALM 119:27 FOR EACH OTHER:

Lord, help us to understand the truth found in Matthew 8–20 over the next several weeks. Give us the grace to meditate on your wondrous works found in these chapters. Amen.

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: Why is it significant that Jesus touched the leper to make him “clean” in this passage? What lessons can we learn from Jesus’ response to the centurion?

Day 2: How do we see Christ fulfilling Old Testament prophecies in this passage? What hard truths can we learn about Christian discipleship from Jesus’ words today?

Day 3: What do we know about Jesus’ authority based on this passage? What do these verses communicate about the impact of Jesus’ presence?

Day 4: What is the paralytic’s greatest need in this story? What does it mean that Jesus is the bridegroom?

Day 5: How does Jesus respond with compassion to individual needs in this passage? Do you view Jesus’ response to your needs as compassionate?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER:

Lord, we come to you asking for clean hearts. Purify our hearts and minds for your glory. Let us have faith like the centurion, trusting you with our lives. We wait for you like a bride waits for her bridegroom. We long for your presence, God! Teach us more about your compassion this week and make us more like you. Amen.

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: What kinds of persecution does Jesus warn his followers about in this passage?

Day 2: According to today's passage, what is the cost of following Jesus? In contrast, what is the cost of denying him?

Day 3: What seems to be the cause of doubt from John the baptist and Jesus' disciples? What does Jesus communicate about his kingdom in verse 11?

Day 4: What is the definition of "woe"? What is Jesus' primary judgment against the cities in this passage?

Day 5: What does this passage teach us about Jesus' purpose on earth? How does the Sabbath point to something greater?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY MATTHEW 10:39 TOGETHER:

Lord, may we find our lives by laying them down for your sake. Teach us what it truly means to live for you and not for ourselves. Amen.

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 4.

DISCUSS

Day 1: How does Jesus distinguish between work and merciful acts on the Sabbath? What is revealed about the Pharisees' heart motives in this passage?

Day 2: Based on the truth offered in 1 John 1:9, why would a person be unable to receive God's forgiveness if they reject the Holy Spirit? How does this relate to Matthew 12:32?

Day 3: Why does Jesus rebuke the religious leaders for asking for a "sign"? What is Jesus teaching about the earthly family and the family of God in this passage?

Day 4: According to Jesus, why does he often teach in parables? How would you summarize the parable of the sowers and what is Jesus communicating through this parable?

Day 5: What is Jesus communicating about his kingdom through the examples of the mustard seed and leaven?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY MATTHEW 11:28 – 30 OVER ONE ANOTHER:

Lord, we come to you heavy laden today, and we ask for rest. We take your yoke, for it is easy, and we praise you because your burden is light. Let us learn from you being gentle and lowly in heart. Bless us with rest for our souls. Amen.

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 2.

DISCUSS

Day 1: Compare and contrast the parables in this passage together. To what aspects of the kingdom is Jesus drawing our attention?

Day 2: How does Jesus' hometown respond to his teaching and why? How do their beliefs about Jesus shape their response?

Day 3: How does Jesus' provision in this passage demonstrate Matthew's theme of fulfillment?

Day 4: Why does Jesus immediately send his disciples away and withdraw after feeding the multitude? Where does he go after dispersing the crowd and what can we learn from this?

Day 5: What is Jesus teaching about human nature and sin in this passage? What hope do we have of being made pure based on these verses?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER:

Lord, help us to view the kingdom of heaven as a great treasure. Allow us to find our hope and joy in you alone, Father. Amen.

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 4.

DISCUSS

Day 1: How does Jesus use the interactions in this passage to illustrate for his disciples the expanding kingdom of God?

Day 2: What specific kinds of needs does Jesus meet in today's passage? What does Jesus' ministry in this primarily gentile region communicate to his disciples and the crowds?

Day 3: What is the difference between the sign the religious leaders ask for in this passage and the "sign of Jonah" Jesus references? (See Jonah 1:17; 3:1-10)

Day 4: What is remarkable about Peter's declaration in this passage? How does Peter know this truth according to Jesus?

Day 5: What shift do you observe in this passage compared to the previous chapters? How does Jesus characterize discipleship in today's reading?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY MATTHEW 16:24-26 TOGETHER:

Lord, we want to follow you. Give us the grace to deny ourselves, take up our crosses daily, and follow you without hindrance. Let us find our lives by laying them down for your sake. Thank you for saving our souls and giving us life. Amen.

week seven

PRAYER

Have one woman open in prayer using the prayer she wrote in the Be Still and Know section on week 7, day 4.

DISCUSS

Day 1: Share your definitions of “transfigured” or “transformed” with one another. What is the significance of Jesus’ transformation?

Day 2: What does Jesus teach the disciples about faith in this passage? How do the disciples respond? What is your personal response?

Day 3: How does Jesus honor and dignify children in this passage? What does it mean to humble oneself like a child? What does it mean to be a child of God?

Day 4: What are the steps Jesus lays out for dealing with conflict among brothers and sisters in the church? What hope does Jesus promise in the midst of conflict in the church?

Day 5: Why is forgiveness difficult? On what basis are disciples of Christ to extend forgiveness?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY MATTHEW 18:3-4 TOGETHER:

Lord, give us the humility of a child that we may please you as children of your kingdom. Thank you for being our loving Father, always watching over us and protecting us. Amen.

week eight

PRAYER

Have one woman open in prayer using the prayer she wrote in the Be Still and Know section on week 8, day 1.

DISCUSS

Day 1: What does Jesus' teaching in this passage reveal about God's goodness and human sinfulness?

Day 2: How are Jesus' responses to the children and to the rich man in this passage different than what the disciples expect? What deeper issues of the heart is Jesus addressing in this interaction?

Day 3: How can wealth be an obstacle to the gospel in a person's life? How do Jesus' words in verse 26 cut to the heart of this passage (as well as the previous passage?) How does the context of verse 26 clarify how we should apply it in our lives?

Day 4: What principles about God's kingdom does Jesus illustrate with this parable?

Day 5: In this passage, how does Jesus build upon the kingdom principle of the first/last? How is this perfectly fulfilled in Jesus himself (v. 28), through his birth, ministry, and eventually his ultimate sacrifice and victory?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY MATTHEW 19:25-26 TOGETHER:

Lord, we praise you because all things are possible with you! Only in your name can we find the salvation we desperately need. Thank you for the beautiful gift of eternal life. Give us the grace to seek you daily. Amen.

*growing
together*

GROUP GUIDE

WALK IN GRACE: MATTHEW 21-28
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 21–28 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, asking God to prepare your hearts and minds to learn from his Word.

DISCUSS

Day 1: Share any initial observations or questions you had about these chapters with the group.

Day 2: Review what you learned about the context of Matthew in your study of chapters 1–7 and chapters 8–20. How has knowing more about the full context changed the way you read this book?

Day 3: What repeated words or themes did you circle in Matthew 21–28?

Day 4: Have each person in the group share what theme(s) she has recognized this week in her repetitive reading of Matthew 21–28. How do these relate to the themes of Matthew 1–20?

Day 5: Share your outline of these final chapters with each other. (Remember, there are no wrong answers!)

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY PSALM 119:34 FOR EACH OTHER:

Lord, help us to understand the truth found in Matthew 21–28 over the next several weeks.

Let us love and obey your Word with our whole hearts. Amen.

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 4.

DISCUSS

Day 1: Why is it significant that Jesus enters the city of Jerusalem in this passage? (See Ps. 48:1–2).

Day 2: In what ways had the temple in Jerusalem become “a den of robbers”? (See Mal. 3:1–4; Jer. 7:9–11; Isa. 56:7). How and why does Jesus cleanse, or purify, the temple?

Day 3: How might Jesus’ cursing of the fig tree be related to the cleansing of the temple? What or whom is Jesus cursing (see Hos. 9:10) and why?

Day 4: As Jesus calls out the religious leaders for their hypocrisy and disobedience, what unlikely people does he commend and why?

Day 5: What does it mean that Jesus is the “cornerstone”? (See Ps. 118:22–23; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet. 2:4–8).

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER:

Lord, we come to you crying, “Hosanna in the highest!” We praise you for your salvation and your glorious grace. Continue to open our eyes and reveal yourself to us as we study your Word together. Amen.

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: What are the major themes of this parable? What kinds of people does the king invite?

Day 2: Why and how do the religious leaders plot against Jesus as the Gospel of Matthew unfolds?

Day 3: Why do Jesus' questions to the Pharisees in verses 43–45 silence all further questions from them?

Day 4: In what ways are the scribes and Pharisees failing to lead and demonstrating hypocrisy? Why isn't God pleased with their good intentions and hard work?

Day 5: How are the warnings in this passage relevant to more than just the religious leaders of Jesus' day?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY TOGETHER FROM MATTHEW 22:37–40:

Lord, help us to love you with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength. Teach us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Thank you, Lord, for loving us first and for saving us. Amen.

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 2.

DISCUSS

Day 1: What is Jesus' tone in these final verses of chapter 23 as he pronounces judgment?

Day 2: According to this passage, what must happen before the end comes?

Day 3: What is Jesus' primary warning to his disciples in this passage? According to the verses you read, what will the second coming of Jesus Christ be like?

Day 4: From these verses, what does it mean to "stay awake" and "be ready" for Christ's return?

Day 5: How can disciples of Jesus "watch" for the coming of the bridegroom, and why is it important?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY TOGETHER FROM MATTHEW 24:35:

Lord, we praise you that your Word will never pass away! We thank you for your firm foundation of truth on which we can stand for all eternity. Thank you that even when heaven and earth pass away, we will be with you forever! Amen.

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 2.

DISCUSS

Day 1: How does this parable fit into the surrounding context of awaiting Christ's return? What does it mean to be a steward?

Day 2: According to this passage, who are the sheep and who are the goats? What important details about the end does Jesus add to his teaching in this passage?

Day 3: What does the word "anoint" mean, and how is it demonstrated in this passage?

Day 4: In this passage, what do the disciples call Jesus (v. 22) and what does Judas call him (v. 25)? Why is this significant?

Day 5: Why is it significant that Jesus' death coincides with Passover? Why do we, as followers of Jesus, continue partaking of the Lord's Supper today?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY TOGETHER FROM MATTHEW 26:26-28:

Thank you, Lord, for giving your body to be broken for us. Thank you, Lord, for pouring your blood out for our salvation. You are our perfect sacrificial Lamb, and we long to live our lives for your glory! Amen.

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 3.

DISCUSS

Day 1: Where do Jesus and his disciples go in this passage, and why? In what manner does Jesus approach the Father in this passage?

Day 2: How does Jesus respond to his betrayal and arrest in this passage? How do his disciples respond, and why?

Day 3: Of what crime do the religious leaders accuse Jesus of, and what sentence does he receive?

Day 4: Contrast Peter's words and actions in this passage with Acts 2:14–41 and 1 Peter 2:21–25. Combine what you know of Peter through Matthew's Gospel with these accounts and discuss the Lord's work in Peter's life.

Day 5: Does Judas seem to display true repentance in this passage, or something else?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY TOGETHER FROM MATTHEW 26:39:

Lord, just as Jesus prayed in the garden, we also pray for your will to be done in our lives. We trust that you know what is best and your will is always right. Give us the faith to walk forward, placing our hope in you alone. Amen.

week seven

PRAYER

Have one woman open in prayer using the prayer she wrote in the Be Still and Know section on week 7, day 4.

DISCUSS

Day 1: Why does the crowd call for the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus?

Day 2: Discuss the specific ways Jesus is then mocked, humiliated, and mistreated in this passage.

Day 3: Share the key words you chose to write down that describe Jesus' crucifixion.

Day 4: What is the significance of the day and time of Jesus' crucifixion coinciding with the sacrifice of the Passover lamb?

Day 5: What happens after Jesus' death? What is significant about these things?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY TOGETHER FROM MATTHEW 27:54:

Lord, let us be filled with awe and wonder in response to your power. Let us never grow tired of praising you for sending your Son for our salvation. Thank you for tearing the veil so that we could come into your presence. Let us never take it for granted. We love you, God. Amen.

week eight

PRAYER

Have one woman open in prayer using the prayer she wrote in the Be Still and Know section on week 8, day 2.

DISCUSS

Day 1: How do the actions of Joseph of Arimathea honor Jesus, and how does this fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah 53:9?

Day 2: Though they had succeeded in crucifying Jesus, what do the religious leaders now fear? According to this passage, what is their proposed solution, and how does Pilate respond?

Day 3: Who are the first witnesses of the resurrection? What instructions does the angel of the Lord give them, and how do they respond?

Day 4: How do the religious leaders respond to the guard's report of Jesus' resurrection, and how does this response contrast the response of the women in yesterday's passage?

Day 5: What specific commands does Jesus give his disciples, and what promise does he make to his followers as he sends them into the world? How does this encourage you personally?

Before you wrap up for the week, share your summaries as well as something new you learned about God or the gospel this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

PRAY TOGETHER FROM MATTHEW 28:19 – 20:

Lord, we long to follow your Great Commission. Be with us as we go and make disciples of all nations. Help us to faithfully teach others of your words and your commands. Thank you for never leaving us or forsaking us. We are waiting for your return with great anticipation! Amen.