



Why are we reading through Matthew?

As we focus on relentlessly pursuing Jesus we want to immerse ourselves in his life, teaching and miracles. Reading Matthew will help us prepare for Easter and how Jesus' death and resurrection changes everything.

Who was Matthew?

Matthew was one of Jesus' followers. He heard and saw Jesus' ministry and wrote it down for our benefit. His Gospel was written for the Jews, by a Jew, about the Jewish Jesus and emphasises that Jesus is the long-awaited King of the Jews. King Jesus is the Saviour God had promised and the Messiah Israel had been waiting for.

Why is it called Matthew's 'Gospel'?

We could say that this is Matthew's book about Jesus or his biography of Jesus' life, but more accurately the word 'Gospel' means 'Good News'. This is the Good News about Jesus according to Matthew.

How do I use this reading plan?

Read a chapter from Matthew on Monday to Friday each week. Most Sundays the message will be about a passage that we will read in the coming week. When we get to the week leading up to Easter we will slow down and spend more time with Jesus in his most significant moments.

Reading+

If you want to do more than read (or listen) to the passage, you could:

- Journal - use the Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer method.
- Visual journal - doodle, sketch or paint a scene from what you read.
- Prayer walk - turn what you've read into prayer for people around you.
- Memorise - pick a verse each week to commit to memory.
- Fast - Participate in the church practice of Lent in the lead up to Easter.
- Discover through music how Bach's *St Matthew Passion* can guide you through Lent and Matthew's Gospel. Hannah Paris has written a new book to help: www.tinyurl.com/sacredsacrifice. By the time you start, we'll be partway into Lent, but it won't take long to catch up.

Week 1 (Sunday 26th February)

Matthew begins with detailed stories about Jesus' birth, childhood and early ministry.

- M - Matthew 1
- T - Matthew 2
- W - Matthew 3
- T - Matthew 4
- F - Matthew 5

Week 2 (Sunday 3rd March)

Jesus teaches and empowers his disciples to show God's care and authority through miracles.

- M - Matthew 6
- T - Matthew 7
- W - Matthew 8
- T - Matthew 9
- F - Matthew 10

Week 3 (Sunday 10th March)

Jesus offers rest to the weary, heals the sick, and invites people to enter the Kingdom of God.

- M - Matthew 11
- T - Matthew 12
- W - Matthew 13
- T - Matthew 14
- F - Matthew 15

Week 4 (Sunday 17th March)

Jesus challenges his followers to follow him in a path of humility, forgiveness and eternal reward.

- M - Matthew 16
- T - Matthew 17
- W - Matthew 18
- T - Matthew 19
- F - Matthew 20

Week 5, Passion Week, beginning Sunday 24th March

We'll spread the readings out over every day of this week, beginning with Jesus' triumphant arrival in Jerusalem where he is praised as King.

- Palm Sunday 24th March - Matthew 21:1-17

Listen as Jesus confronts hypocrisy and warns that there will be trouble and trial ahead. He urges people to be ready for his return at any time.

- Monday - Matthew 21:18 - 22:46
- Tuesday - Matthew 23:1 - 24:51
- Wednesday - Matthew 25:1 - 26:16

Follow Jesus to the upper room where he shares a final meal with his disciples and submits to the Father's will in the garden of Gethsemane.

- Thursday - Matthew 26:17-75

Stand at the foot of the cross as Jesus willingly lays down his life, bearing the weight of sin and offering forgiveness and reconciliation.

- Good Friday 29th March - Matthew 27:1-61

Reflect on the silence of the tomb as Jesus rests in death, fulfilling prophecy and securing victory over sin and death.

- Easter Saturday 30th March - Matthew 27:62-66

Embrace joy as Jesus rises from the dead! He sends his disciples (and us) to proclaim the Good News to everyone, everywhere.

- Easter Sunday 31st March - Matthew 28:1-20**