



MONDAY 1st FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Matthew 1:1-17

Plug In...

After mentioning the big names in the line towards Jesus, we expect the genealogy to set out establishing the purity and superiority of Jesus' bloodline. While it does trace from David and Abraham, it seems like Mathew has gone through the Old Testament looking for the most scandalous situations and dropped in a few extra names to trigger these Old Testament scenarios that went down.

Chew It Over...

Notice which names are being used as triggers. Consider what Matthew communicates about God by highlighting these people with their baggage in the line of Jesus Christ?

Prayer Suggestion

Thank God for His mercy and compassion. Acknowledge our moral mess before Him and praise Him that God provides Jesus for people whose mess ordinarily would keep them away from his presence.



TUESDAY 2nd FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Matthew 1:18-22

Plug In...

Matthew doesn't rush the announcement of the birth of Jesus. Rather he keeps slowing our reading down to explain at length that Joseph and Mary did not have sex (look also at v.25). To make this point he even adds background info on the overall character of Joseph and insight into what Joseph was thinking.

Chew It Over...

Why does Matthew go to great lengths to show that Joseph didn't have sex with Mary? Why is this important to understanding that Jesus will save his people from their sins (v.21)?

Prayer Suggestion

Praise God that Jesus is all God's initiative. Praise God that through the Holy Spirit Jesus is God's pure solution for dealing with our deepest and dirtiest problem: corrupting sin. Thank God that our conversion is like a virgin birth, completely God's initiative (John 1:13).



WEDNESDAY 3rd FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Matthew 1:23-25 & Isaiah 7

For the second time in chapter 1, Matthew provides a name for Jesus and goes on to explain it: Immanuel = God with us.

Chew It Over...

Read the Old Testament where this was first spoken about (Isaiah 7:14) and ask what did this name and sign communicate for the listeners in Isaiah's day? Why might Matthew be drawing our attention to this?

Prayer Suggestion

Talk to God now using the names He has given us to refer to Him by. Appreciate Him that in revealing His names He relates to us a personally, both who He is and what He does.



THURSDAY 4th FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Matthew 2:1-15

Plug In...

Calling them “wise men” makes us think they are people endowed with wisdom. The literal word is *magi*. These guys were students of the stars, they were masters of the dark arts - magicians.

Chew It Over...

What do we learn about God guiding, particularly from Israel’s point of view, idolaters and pagans in the midst of their dark arts to come and worship Jesus.

Prayer Suggestion

Praise God that His grace can find us, no matter what roads we’ve taken. Think of specific people we know. Ask God that His grace will penetrate to where they are and call them to worship Jesus to where they are too.



FRIDAY 5th FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Matthew 2:16-23

Plug In...

Herod does a monstrous thing to the very people he was to look after as leader.

Chew It Over...

After lots of detail has been given to Herod thoughts, feelings, and horrendous actions (2:1-17), why does Matthew report Herod's death so briefly (2:19)? How does this help frame how we think about leaders in God's world?

Prayer Suggestion

Thank God that Jesus not only has the authority to change things for the people he leads, but he has the compassion to want to do what it takes. Pray for regions under oppressive leaders. May they find hope in a greater leader.



WEEKEND 6-7th FEB 2016

SERIES: GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Read: Micah 5 (cf. Matthew 2:6)

Plug In...

Matthew talks about Jesus as the alternative leader to Herod whom the prophet Micah announced God would provide. With more time this weekend, reading the whole book of Micah in one sitting adds further definition to what type of leader for His people he is.

Chew It Over...

What is the impetus behind God sending the leader described in Micah 5:2?

Prayer Suggestion

Acknowledge before God He has the *might* and *right* to judge all the earth with its corrupt leaders. Knowing that within us we too contain the sin that would corrupt us should we be given power, bow before Jesus and pay homage to him; thank him for his refuge (Psalm 2:12).