

Faith Lutheran Church + Grand Blanc, MI + www.faihgb.org

Bible Reading Journey

Key Study Points by Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann

Each day, using the notes on this page:

- Pray for Spirit-filled insight as you read God's Word.
- Look for Law and Gospel themes that point us to Jesus.
- Apply the readings to your life.
- Pray to Jesus, as the readings inspire you, for yourself, your family, your church and your world.

Historical Context: Matthew, the Apostle, formerly known as Levi, the Jewish tax collector, wrote this Gospel account ~50 AD. Maybe slightly before Mark and Luke, he wrote at about the same time as them.

Law & Gospel Themes:

Being a faithful Jew himself, Matthew wrote especially to a Jewish audience that would appreciate his many references to the fulfillment of OT prophecy. Matthew's most important theme is the "kingdom of God/heaven," which is mentioned 48 times by Jesus in this account. Matthew shows how the reign of King David finds its fulfillment in the reign of

Jesus both in the hearts of believers and over the entire physical universe. This kingdom is visible now as penitent and forgiven believers share the love of Jesus they have received. The kingdom of God will be fully visible on Judgment Day when Jesus returns in power to claim His own and banish the unbelievers. The structure of Matthew is built around five "sermons" (Chs 5-7, 10, 13, 18 & 24-25).

Life Application Starters:

How does it impact you to see Jesus so clearly revealed as the Messiah or Savior prophesied all through the OT? What is

the significance of the genealogy of Jesus in Ch 1, esp. at this point in our FBRJ? Reflect on the significance of knowing you are a citizen of the eternal kingdom of God, under the reign of Jesus. How is this esp. helpful in our current geo-political context?

Prayer Starters: That the Spirit will open our hearts to recognize and trust in Jesus as the center of all of Scripture and ruler of the Kingdom of God. In praise to God for our place in His eternal kingdom as a free gift of His grace for Jesus' sake. To boldly proclaim the reign of Jesus to the world before He returns.

Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Matthew 1:1-2:23

Tuesday: Matthew 3:1-4:25

Wednesday: Matthew 5:1-7:29

Thursday: Matthew 8:1-9:38

Friday: Matthew 10:1-11:30

Saturday: Matthew 12:1-13:58

June's Memory Verses:

Matthew 1:22-23, "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel.'"

Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 28:19-20, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Mark 1:15, "The time is fulfilled, & the kingdom of God is at hand; repent & believe in the gospel."

Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Author of Matthew: The apostle Matthew **Date:** ~50 AD

New Insights:

Questions to Pursue Further:

Insights from My Accountability Partners:

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Historical Context: Matthew, the Apostle, formerly known as Levi, the Jewish tax collector, wrote this Gospel account ~50 AD. Maybe slightly before Mark and Luke, he wrote at about the same time as them.

Law & Gospel Themes:

In Matt. 16:19, Jesus gives "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" to His Church. This is the power to forgive or retain sins. Ch 18 highlights the usage of the keys by the Church in the process of church discipline that is to lead sinners to confession and forgiveness. In Ch 19, Jesus makes clear that marriage is the life-long union of one man and one

woman, just as it was established by God the Father at creation (See Gen. 2:24). Although Jesus is attacked by the Jewish leaders, He remains in control, teaching valuable lessons to His disciples then and now. Chs 24-25 are rich with teaching from Jesus about the coming destruction of the temple, Judgment Day and the eternal Kingdom of God.

Life Application Starters:

What comfort do you receive from the proper usage of the "keys of the kingdom" in our life as the Church? Why is proper Church discipline according to Matthew 18 a

loving practice? Why are many Christian individuals and congregations hesitant to follow this practice? How do false practices surrounding marriage today destroy its blessing and its power as a Gospel witness? How are we to stand against those who attack us for our faith and witness?

Prayer Starters: To

courageously care for others by calling them to repentance. That the Spirit will lead many to repent. For marriage to be preserved as a blessing to us and a Gospel witness to all. For boldness in Jesus' name, even in the face of opposition.

Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Matthew 14:1-15:39

Tuesday: Matthew 16:1-17:27

Wednesday: Matthew 18:1-19:30

Thursday: Matthew 20:1-21:46

Friday: Matthew 22:1-23:39

Saturday: Matthew 24:1-25:46

June's Memory Verses:

Matthew 1:22-23, "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel.'"

Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 28:19-20, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

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Author of Matthew: The apostle Matthew **Date:** ~50 AD

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Historical Context: Matthew, the Apostle, wrote his Gospel account ~50 AD. Mark, likely John Mark, the young disciple of Jesus who fled naked on the night Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, wrote his Gospel account ~50-60 AD.

Law & Gospel Themes:

In Chs 26-27, Matthew focuses on the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb of God, who paid for our sin by the shedding of His blood. Jesus ends the need for the sacrificial system of the OT. After His rising in victory, Jesus gives His disciples clear purpose...to make disciples by baptizing and teaching in

His name (Mt 28:19-20). Mark is the shortest Gospel account, using simple, bold, expressive language to describe the work in action by Jesus. He highlights the divinity of Jesus as the "Son of God," in 1:1, throughout, and then quoting these words from the centurion who saw Jesus die a uniquely divine death on the cross (15:39). The two key parts of Mark are Jesus' public ministry (Chs 1-8) and His Passion (Chs 9-16).

Life Application Starters:

Who/what brings people to saving faith? How does this take the pressure off of us in serving Jesus?

What does this require of us in serving Jesus? Why might Mark be a good book of the Bible to be read by someone brand new to Christian teaching? What's the significance of Mark pointing out the divinity of Jesus?

Prayer Starters: Thank Jesus for being the sacrifice to end all sacrifices. Thank God for His work in Baptism and His Word to bring people to faith in Him and keep them there. That we will faithfully point people to Jesus as true God who could and did pay the price for our sin. That more will read/hear the Word of God and be brought to salvation.

Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Matthew 26:1-27:66

Tuesday: Matthew 28:1-20

Wednesday: Mark 1:1-2:28

Thursday: Mark 3:1-4:41

Friday: Mark 5:1-6:56

Saturday: Mark 7:1-8:38

June's Memory Verses:

Matthew 1:22-23, "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel.'"

Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

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Author of Matthew: The apostle Matthew **Date:** ~50 AD **Author of Mark:** John Mark, the disciple who fled the Garden of Gethsemane naked and assisted the mission endeavors of Paul, Barnabas and Peter. **Date:** ~50-60 AD

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Historical Context: Mark, likely John Mark, the young disciple of Jesus who fled naked on the night Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, wrote his Gospel account ~50-60 AD.

Law & Gospel Themes: Jesus is always in control of His life and ministry. Mark highlights the "Gospel secret" motif (See 4:11), reflecting that Jesus did not allow premature revelation of His true identity as the Son of God and Savior. For instance, see 9:9-10, just after His transfiguration. Jesus was not here to impress men or gain a huge following during His life, but to defeat Satan and appease God's wrath against

our sin. This may also explain the likely abrupt ending of his account at 16:8, as Mark states what's important in 16:6, "He has risen; he is not here." The victory is complete. We don't NEED any more details. The powerful and true Gospel stands for eternity...for you and me. Mark's account of his naked escape (14:51f) reveals that our call to serve is not based on our greatness, but on the grace of Jesus.

Life Application Starters: Why is it hard to serve a God who is not popular by human standards? What sustains us in serving such

a God? Why is Jesus' bodily resurrection the most important teaching of our faith? How is this the focal point of all of Scripture? How have you been "caught naked" in your sins? What comfort do you receive in the inclusion of Mark's naked flight?

Prayer Starters: That we will not be concerned about our popularity among men when it comes to following Jesus. To rely fully on the Word and Supper of Jesus as our sustaining power for eternal life and service. In thanksgiving that Jesus lives in the flesh and we will too. In praise for God's call of the weak and lowly.

Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Mark 9:1-50

Tuesday: Mark 10:1-52

Wednesday: Mark 11:1-33

Thursday: Mark 12:1-13:37

Friday: Mark 14:1-72

Saturday: Mark 15:1-47

June's Memory Verses:

Matthew 1:22-23, "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel.'"

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