
GOD WITH US: Matthew 1:18-25**CREATE INTEREST**

Question: What are different names or titles that you are called? What do these mean to you?

STUDY THE BIBLE**Matthew 1:18-21**

Read Aloud: Have someone read Matthew 1:18-21.

Discussion: What details in these verses show Joseph's dilemma and God's intervention?

When have fear or uncertainty made obedience difficult for you?

Why does Matthew emphasize both Joseph's righteousness and his mercy?

Matthew 1:22-23

Read Aloud: Have someone read Matthew 1:22-23.

Discussion: What prophecy does Matthew cite, and why does it matter?

How does the truth that Jesus is Immanuel, God with us, strengthen believers in hard seasons?

Why is Matthew's use of fulfillment language so important to this Gospel?

Matthew 1:24-25

Read Aloud: Have someone read aloud Matthew 1:24-25.

Discussion: How does Joseph respond to the angel's message?

What is one area of life where immediate obedience would honor God this week?

What makes Joseph's obedience especially costly and significant?

CONNECT TO CHRIST (APPLY GOD'S WORD)

Discussion: How does our passage this week point to Jesus?

Application: Choose one of the following ways to apply the study to your life this week:

Practice immediate obedience in one area where you already know God is calling you to act.

Meditate on Matthew 1:21 this week and thank God that salvation rests in Christ's work, not yours.

Encourage someone who feels alone by reminding them that in Jesus, God has come near.

PRAYER TIME

JESUS' UPSIDE DOWN KINGDOM: Matthew 20:20-28**CREATE INTEREST**

Question: Where do people in our culture usually look for greatness, status, or influence?

STUDY THE BIBLE

Matthew 20:20-22

Read Aloud: Have someone read Matthew 20:20-22.

Discussion: What request is made, and how does Jesus respond?

How can selfish ambition appear in spiritual spaces like church, serving, or leadership?

Why does Jesus use the image of the cup?

Matthew 20:23-24

Read Aloud: Have someone or a few people read Matthew 20:23-24.

Discussion: How do the other disciples respond to the brothers' request?

Where are you tempted to compare your role, gifting, or recognition with others?

What does this moment reveal about the disciples' spiritual maturity?

Matthew 20:25-28

Read Aloud: Have someone read aloud Matthew 20:25-28.

Discussion: How does Jesus contrast worldly leadership with kingdom leadership?

What is one practical way you can serve someone this week without seeking credit?

Why is verse 28 central to the gospel and not just to leadership?

CONNECT TO CHRIST (APPLY GOD'S WORD)

Discussion: How does our passage this week point to Jesus?

Application: Choose one of the following ways to apply the study to your life this week:

Choose one unnoticed act of service this week and do it joyfully without recognition.

Confess one area where selfish ambition or comparison has shaped your attitude.

Pray each morning for a servant's heart that reflects Jesus.

PRAYER TIME

THE SHEPHERD WHO RESTORES: Psalm 23**CREATE INTEREST**

Question: When do you feel most at rest, safe, or cared for?

STUDY THE BIBLE

Psalm 23:1-3

Read Aloud: Have someone read Psalm 23:1-3.

Discussion: What actions of the shepherd are highlighted in these verses?

Where do you most need God's restoring care right now?

Why does David connect God's guidance with his name's sake?

Psalm 23:4

Read Aloud: Have someone read Psalm 23:4.

Discussion: What changes in tone or language in verse 4?

What helps believers face dark valleys without being ruled by fear?

Why is the valley included in a psalm about God's care?

Psalm 23:5-6

Read Aloud: Have someone read aloud Psalm 23:5-6.

Discussion: What images of blessing and security appear in these verses?

How can the promise of God's goodness and mercy reshape your week?

What does it mean to dwell in the house of the Lord forever?

CONNECT TO CHRIST (APPLY GOD'S WORD)

Discussion: How does our passage this week point to Jesus?

Application: Choose one of the following ways to apply the study to your life this week:

Pray each morning this week, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

Write down one fear and surrender it to God, trusting his presence in the valley.

Care for someone practically this week as a reflection of the shepherd's kindness.

PRAYER TIME

THE WAY OF THE CROSS: Mark 8:31–38

CREATE INTEREST

Question: What is one kind of discomfort or inconvenience you wish you could remove from your life forever?

STUDY THE BIBLE

Mark 8:31–33

Read Aloud: Have someone read Mark 8:31–33.

Discussion: What does Jesus begin to teach plainly about the Son of Man in these verses?

When you think about suffering and rejection in your own life, how does Jesus' clear teaching about his path shape the way you view your hardships?

Why is Peter's reaction to Jesus teaching so serious that Jesus rebukes him as thinking according to human concerns rather than God's?

Mark 8:34–35

Read Aloud: Have someone read Mark 8:34–35.

Discussion: What things does Jesus say a person must do if they want to follow him?

What might denying yourself and taking up your cross look like for you this week? Think about one ordinary area of life: home, work, school, or time.

How does Jesus' statement about losing life to save it challenge common cultural assumptions about what a good life is?

Mark 8:36–38

Read Aloud: Have someone read aloud Mark 8:36–38.

What contrast does Jesus make between gaining the world and forfeiting one's soul?

Where are you personally most tempted to “gain the world” (in possessions, image, achievement, or something else) and how might this passage call you to respond differently?

Why is being ashamed of Jesus and his words such a serious issue that he ties it to how he will respond when he comes in glory?

CONNECT TO CHRIST (APPLY GOD’S WORD)

Discussion: How does our passage this week point to Jesus?

Application: Choose one of the following ways to apply the study to your life this week:

Identify one area where comfort or self-protection has been ruling your choices, and submit that area to Jesus in prayer and obedience.

Read Mark 8:31–38 each day this week and ask God to show you what cross-bearing faithfulness looks like in one specific relationship or responsibility.

Practice public allegiance to Jesus by speaking clearly about your faith in one conversation where you would normally stay silent.

PRAYER TIME

BLESSED IS SHE WHO BELIEVED: Luke 1:39-56**CREATE INTEREST**

Question: Think of a time someone shared really big news with you (good or surprising). How did you react, and what do you remember most about that moment?

STUDY THE BIBLE

Luke 1:39-45

Read Aloud: Have someone read Luke 1:39-45.

Discussion: What happens when Mary greets Elizabeth?

What helps believers trust God's promises before they see full outcomes?

Why is Elizabeth's statement about Mary's belief so significant?

Luke 1:46-49

Read Aloud: Have someone read Luke 1:46-49.

Discussion: What truths about God fill Mary's praise?

How can humility deepen a person's worship?

Why does Mary emphasize her low estate?

Luke 1:50-56

Read Aloud: Have someone read aloud Luke 1:50-56.

Discussion: What patterns of God's action are described in these verses?

Which line in Mary's song speaks most directly to your current season, and why?

How does Mary's song prepare readers for Jesus' ministry?

CONNECT TO CHRIST (APPLY GOD'S WORD)

Discussion: How does our passage this week point to Jesus?

Application: Choose one of the following ways to apply the study to your life this week:

Write your own short prayer of praise based on God's faithfulness.

Encourage someone who is waiting on God with a Scripture promise.

Confess one area of pride and ask God to form deeper humility in you.

PRAYER TIME