A top-down view of a white spiral-bound notebook on a light-colored wooden surface. A black pen lies diagonally across the top left of the notebook. In the upper left corner, a small potted plant with long, thin green leaves is visible. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

ISSUE NO. 1
MATTHEW 1-4

The Bible Community

11 Bible studies on Matthew 1-4

Can God Use Me? | Obedience Takes Courage | Who is Your King? | Insecurity and Jealousy | God Speaks Through Dreams | Repentance and Change | Baptism | Temptation | Light in the Darkness | Following Jesus | Good News of the Kingdom

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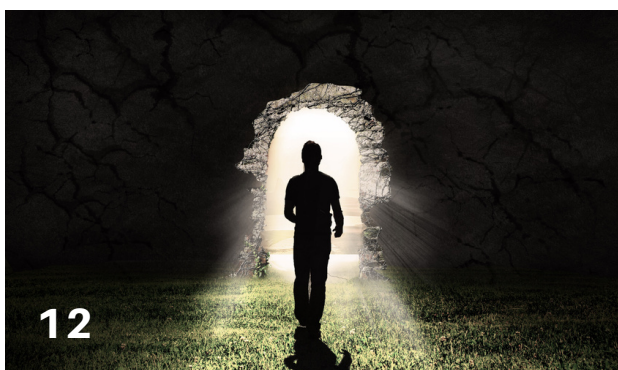
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THE BIBLE COMMUNITY



Introduction

THE BEGINNING OF MATTHEW'S GOSPEL INTRODUCES US TO JESUS, WHO HE IS AND HOW HIS MINISTRY STARTED.

The first two chapters tell the story of Jesus' birth, the visit of the Magi and the family's escape to Egypt.

Chapters three and four tell us about the ministry of John the Baptist, Jesus' baptism and temptation, his first disciples, and the beginning of his ministry.

TOPICS COVERED

The eleven Bible studies in this series look at the following topics: The people used by God; obedience; King Jesus; insecurity and jealousy; dreams; repentance; baptism; temptation; light; following Jesus; the good news of the Kingdom.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS

Each Bible study has four questions. The four questions follow a model based on the anagram READ.

1. Research

Look at the Bible text in more detail.

2. Explore

Look for themes throughout the Bible.

3. Apply

Look back at examples from your own life or those around you.

4. Do

Look forward to the future, and plan any changes you need to make.



Matthew 1:1-17

READ THIS BIBLE PASSAGE AND USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR STUDY, REFLECTIONS, AND PRAYERS

How many names do you recognise in this list? What do you know about them?

Which of these people do you most identify with— Tamar (Genesis 38), Ruth (Ruth 1-4), Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11) or Mary (Luke 1:26-38)?

Is there anything in your background or past that you believe is stopping you from being used by God?

Offer up to God your past experiences so that he can heal, transform, and use them to build his kingdom.



Matthew 1:18-25

READ THIS BIBLE PASSAGE AND USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR STUDY, REFLECTIONS, AND PRAYERS

What do you think was the reaction of Joseph and Mary's friends and family when they discovered Mary was expecting a baby?

Can you think of any other examples in the Bible where people obeyed God but were misunderstood?

Has God asked you to do something difficult? Is there anything holding you back?

Write down your fears and lay them before God. Ask God to give you the courage to obey him.



Matthew 2:1-12

READ THIS BIBLE PASSAGE AND USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR STUDY, REFLECTIONS, AND PRAYERS

The Magi were aware of Jesus' birth, but King Herod and the Chief Priests were not. Why?

Read Micah 5:2-4. What type of king and Messiah were the Jews expecting?

Is Jesus King over your life? Have you been looking for God in the wrong places?

Take some time to worship Jesus as the King of Kings. What gift can you offer him as an act of worship?

**INSECURITY
AND
JEALOUSY**

Matthew 2:13-18

READ THIS BIBLE PASSAGE AND USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR STUDY, REFLECTIONS, AND PRAYERS

What do you think motivated Herod to kill so many children?

Read Exodus 1:8-2:2. Do you see any similarities or differences between the birth of Jesus and the birth of Moses?

How do you feel when someone else gets more attention than you or gets promoted ahead of you?

Do you have any insecurities that are affecting the way you treat other people? Bring them to God in prayer and ask for his help and forgiveness.



Matthew 2:19-23

READ THIS BIBLE PASSAGE AND USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR STUDY, REFLECTIONS, AND PRAYERS

How many times did God speak to Joseph in a dream? What messages did God give him?

In the book of Genesis, God spoke to several people in dreams (See, for example — Genesis 20:3-7; 28:10-17; 31:10-13 & 24; 37:5-11; 40:1-23; 41:1-40) What did God say to them? What changes happened in their lives as a result of those dreams?

Have you ever had a significant dream that you remember?

Ask God if there's anything he wants to say to you today.



Matthew 3:7-12

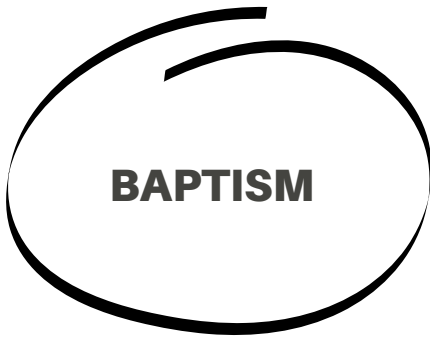
READ THIS BIBLE PASSAGE AND USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR STUDY, REFLECTIONS, AND PRAYERS

What does this passage tell us about repentance?

Read Luke 3:7-14. What are the fruits of repentance?

Has God ever challenged you to repent of something? What did you change?

Ask God if there is anything he wants you to change in your life.



Matthew 3:13-17

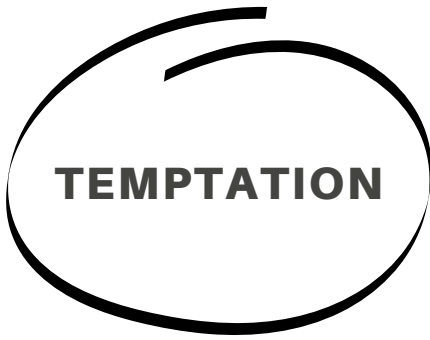
READ THIS BIBLE PASSAGE AND USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR STUDY, REFLECTIONS, AND PRAYERS

Why did Jesus get baptised? What happened to him as he came up out of the water?

How important was baptism to the early church, and what did it mean to them? (See, for example — Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:37-41; Romans 6:1-4)

Have you been baptised? How did your experience compare to the baptisms described in the Bible?

Jesus heard a voice from heaven saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him, I am well pleased." Ask God to reveal the depth of His love for Jesus and for you (1 John 4:9-10).



Matthew 4:1-11

READ THIS BIBLE PASSAGE AND USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR STUDY, REFLECTIONS, AND PRAYERS

What were the three temptations Jesus faced? Why do you think the Holy Spirit led Jesus out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil?

Read Hebrews 4:15. What other temptations do you think Jesus experienced?

Are you facing any particular temptation at the moment? In which areas do you feel most vulnerable?

Write out a Bible verse that you can read the next time you experience temptation.



Matthew 4:12-17

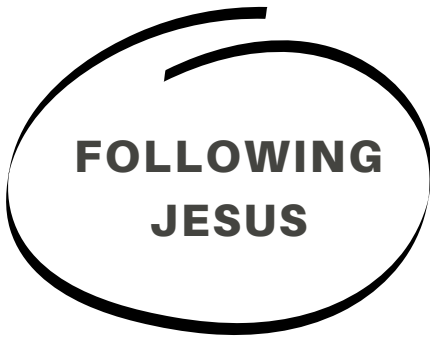
READ THIS BIBLE PASSAGE AND USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR STUDY, REFLECTIONS, AND PRAYERS

How was Jesus' arrival in Galilee like the dawning of a new day?

Read Isaiah 9:1-7. How did Jesus fulfil Isaiah's prophecy?

Are there any areas of your life that seem dark or confused? Can you think of a time when you lived "under the shadow of death"?

Ask God to shine his light into the dark areas of your life. Are there any changes he wants you to make?



Matthew 4:18-22

READ THIS BIBLE PASSAGE AND USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR STUDY, REFLECTIONS, AND PRAYERS

What similarities are there between catching fish and being a fisher of men?

When Jesus called people to follow him, what did he ask them to leave behind (See, for example — Matthew 8:19-22; Mark 10:21; Luke 5:27-28)?

What have you left behind to follow Jesus? What would you find most difficult to give up?

Ask God to help you follow him wholeheartedly. Is there anything that he wants you to give up?



Matthew 4:23-25

READ THIS BIBLE PASSAGE AND USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR STUDY, REFLECTIONS, AND PRAYERS

Jesus began his ministry in Galilee. What three things did he do? (v23)
Why do you think Jesus was followed by such large crowds?

The word Gospel means 'good news'. What is the good news of the kingdom (v23)?

Has God ever healed you or someone you know?

How can you share the Good News of God's Kingdom with someone today?

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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She is part of a Pentecostal church in South-West England. She studied at Mattersey Hall Bible College and later at the University of Exeter, gaining a BA Honours in Biblical Theology and an MA in Theology.



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