



The Voice of the King

A SERIES ON MATTHEW 8-12

How to use this book:

Personal Devotions

- Use this book to help you read your Bible every day. You will find a guide that will help you read through scriptures related to our sermon series. Scribble down your thoughts and questions and remember to pray and ask God to speak to you by His Spirit, through His Word. Additionally, we've recommended two memory verses for this series.
- Listen to our Spotify playlist by searching for the 'The Bridge Church – Songs We Sing' playlist.
- Please make note of and pray too, for the mentioned 'What's On' events in our term calendar.

Connect Groups

- Take this guide with you to your Connect Group each week. Bible Studies based on the Sunday Bible talks have been provided for each week, so you could use this space to write down comments, questions and prayer points that come from the study that week and prayer requests from the members of your group.

Church

- Keep this guide with your Bible and bring it with you to church.
- Scribble down sermon notes in the space provided.

Dear Church,

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30)

This is one of my favourite verses in the Bible, as Jesus invites us to come to him as we are and find rest for our weary and burdened souls. This is my prayer as we preach through Matthew 8-12 this term, that we would hear 'The Voice of the King' and find deep rest in Him. Be prepared to be challenged by the authority of Jesus, encouraged by the commission of Jesus, comforted by the invitation of Jesus – but most of all I pray we'd encounter Jesus and experience deep intimacy with him.

God has been doing amazing things in our church family over the past few months, and it's good to look back in gratitude and praise. To name but a few things:

- The number of people who have met Jesus through the Alpha Course and the Christianity Explored courses, including many from unchurched backgrounds and different first languages, some of whom have come from Playtime and Everyday English or other ministries here at church;
- Every week we have so many newcomers to all our congregations, many of whom then do the Belonging Course and make this church their new family;
- The reality that every Sunday we have 10 gatherings, with over 250 servant hearted volunteers who make that happen;
- The visits from a number of our mission partners such as Morgan & Olivia, Matt & Lisa, Shane & Ruth and their families, who have inspired us with stories of God's goodness around the globe;

- Our Central Prayer evenings have been so well attended, and we've seen God answer many prayers;
- Our kids and youth outreach ministries (Playtime, BridgeKids and Ignite, as well as Mega Monday and Mini World Cup) have seen the gospel being proclaimed with clarity and boldness every week;
- Everyday English continues to grow, with so many people hearing the gospel as they learn the basics of English;
- Our Wellbeing & Care ministries (e.g. Pastoral Care, Seminars, Living Single, Marriage, Parenting, meals for those in need) continue to be a blessing to many;
- Engaging our friends & family through our Conversations That Matter series;
- The Intern programme bearing great fruit in the lives of many.

It's hard to believe we are at Term 4, and in addition to all our regular ministries there is so much to look forward to:

- Our All Church Day Away on Sunday 23rd October – as we gather in one place, as one church to sit under God's word and encourage one another;
- The Launch of our Foundations Course on Tuesday 11th October, a 10 week course for those starting out in the Christian life or wanting to revisit the foundational truths of the gospel;
- Our Alpha Course starting on Tuesday 11th October, where we are praying for 80 guests who are not yet believers and praying for a revival;
- Christmas! We have all our Christmas Services, some outreach events, and a free Christmas day lunch. Please do make the most of these opportunities, be bold in inviting people and praying for God's Spirit to open people's eyes to see Jesus.

In our 'Year of Loving the Nations', please keep praying for your chosen nation and keep partnering with your chosen mission partner. And please keep praying for your 5 people who you long to know and love Jesus. My prayer is that as a church we have a big vision of who God is and what God is doing around the world, as well as in our city.

Rachel and I are thankful for this privilege of serving the saints, and we crave your prayers.

God has been exceedingly gracious to us this year – so let's give Him all the glory.

With love in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Dale". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Paul Dale
(Senior Pastor)

Overview of the Gospel of Matthew

William Barclay writes: "In no other gospel is the teaching of Jesus so systematically assembled and gathered together. And it is pre-eminently the gospel which is concerned to show us Jesus as the man born to be King."

Authorship:

While Matthew did not sign his own name to "his" gospel, the early church uniformly attested to the apostle's authorship of the book. As early as AD 140, a Christian named Papias wrote that Matthew had compiled the sayings of the Lord in Hebrew (presumably before Matthew translated them into Greek for a larger audience).

Matthew's name appears in all the biblical lists of the twelve apostles, with his history as a tax collector distinguished him from the other apostles. When Jesus called him, Matthew was sitting in the tax collector's booth (Matt 9:9), collecting taxes for Herod Antipas, and this may have been along a commercial trading route about 6.4 km from Capernaum. However, since the narrative surrounding Matthew's call is set in Capernaum (Matt 9:1, 7, 10; cf. 4:13), the tax booth may have been on the Sea of Galilee at Capernaum, since Herod also taxed fishermen. Mark's and Luke's Gospels describe him as "Levi the son of Alphaeus" (Mark 2:14) and "Levi" (Luke 5:27). The reason for the variation in names has elicited much discussion, but most scholars believe that the tax collector had two names, Matthew Levi, which he either possessed from birth or took on following his conversion. His occupation as a tax collector implies that he had training in scribal techniques and was thus able to write, while his identity as a Galilean Jewish Christian suggests his ability to interpret the words and actions of Jesus considering OT messianic expectations.

Immediately after his call to follow Jesus, Matthew hosted a feast for Jesus in his home with an invitation list made up of Matthew's sinful friends. Apparently, Matthew did not think it odd that Jesus and he would associate with the sinful and downtrodden of society.

Date:

The gospel of Matthew has been notoriously difficult to date. Several factors speak to a date ranging from AD 60–65. First, the book makes no mention of the destruction of the temple, an event which occurred in AD 70. Such a cataclysmic event likely would have received some comment, particularly in a book so clearly influenced by Judaism. The largely Jewish character of the book also suggests it was written at a time when much of the evangelism by Christians was directed more exclusively at Jews, something that became less and less common as the decades passed. Finally, many scholars believe Mark to have been the first gospel composed, making it most probable that Matthew was written soon after.

Audience:

Matthew is the most Jewish-centric of the four gospels. The apostle regularly invoked the writings of the Old Testament prophets to illustrate Jesus's identity as Israel's long-awaited Messiah. Given that the account was written in Greek, not Aramaic, and that much of the language in the book assumes the readers are familiar with Jewish customs and terminology, the audience seems to be former Jews who have converted to Christianity, probably those living in an urban area such as Palestine or Antioch.

Why is Matthew Important:

The apostle Matthew, a Jew himself, offered a decidedly Jewish perspective on the ministry of Jesus. He included more than fifty direct citations—and even more indirect allusions—from the Old Testament.

This exceeds any of the other gospels and indicates that Matthew had the Jewish population in mind when he sat down to write. Matthew's extensive connections between Jesus and the Old Testament provide ample prophetic evidence for Jesus's ministry but also gives us a glimpse into how first-century readers approached the Old Testament with a Christ-centred mind-set.

Matthew's gospel answers the question on the mind of every Jewish reader: "If Jesus is the King of the Jews, then where is God's promised kingdom?" Matthew reveals that Jesus did offer the kingdom to Israel, but the offer was rejected (Matt 4:17, 16:13-28; 21:42-43). God's primary work in the world is now accomplished through the building of Christ's church, after which Jesus will come again to earth and establish His kingdom—ruling the world from Israel.

Matthew reflected his desire to communicate that Jesus is God's chosen King in his opening line, "This is the genealogy of Jesus, the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt 1:1). From there, Matthew consistently took his readers back to the Old Testament, providing Old Testament testimony regarding the birth of Jesus, Bethlehem as the location of Jesus's birth, the flight to Egypt, Herod's slaughter of the infants, and the beginning of Jesus's ministry. In a world where many in the Jewish community had claimed the role of Messiah for themselves, Matthew's commitment to grounding the life of Jesus in the Old Testament raised Jesus above the multitude of these false messiahs. The apostle painted a portrait of our Lord that highlights His uniqueness among all others to ever walk this earth.

What's the big idea / flow?

Matthew's account fully and systematically explains from Jesus's genealogy and the circumstances of his birth to his teaching, healing, and other miracles.

The account goes beyond historical information to serve as a full biography, using stories about Jesus to help people understand who Jesus is—the Messiah, the Saviour of Israel. Discipleship, church leadership, and preparing for the end times are other themes.

Ch 1-2: The book begins with Jesus's origin story: his genealogical ties connecting him both to David and to Abraham, the events surrounding his birth to the virgin Mary, his family's flight to Egypt seeking refuge from the infant massacres ordered by King Herod, and his eventual upbringing in Nazareth.

Ch 3-4: Then the book shifts to the beginning of Jesus's public ministry, including his baptism by the prophet John, his temptation in the wilderness after 40 days of fasting, and his calling of the first disciples. This public ministry is the largest portion of the Gospel of Matthew, and the account appears to be structured primarily around five key discourses, or sermons, from Jesus:

Ch 5-7: **The Sermon on the Mount:** How are the citizens of the kingdom to live? This sermon covers the central principles of Christian discipleship and includes the Beatitudes, a set of blessings offering a new standard of living that focuses on mercy, humility, and love. It also includes lessons on how to pray, including the Lord's Prayer, as well Jesus's teachings on adultery, anger, false prophets, loving one's enemies, and more.

Ch 8-12: **The Missiological Discourse (Ch 8):** Often called the "Little Commission". How are traveling disciples to conduct themselves on their evangelistic journeys on earth? Jesus sends out his 12 apostles (Matt 10) to perform healings and other miracles. This comes just after Matthew recounts a series of miracles performed by Jesus, including healing a man suffering from leprosy and restoring two men possessed by demons.

Ch 13-17: **The Parabolic Discourse (Ch 13):** The parables Jesus told. This focuses on several key parables about the Kingdom of Heaven, all designed to illustrate God's plan—the parables of the sower, weeds, mustard seed, yeast, pearl, net, and more.

Ch 18-22: **The Ecclesiological Discourse:** Focusing on the Church. Jesus has informed his disciples of his pending death and resurrection, and here he offers instructions on how they will lead a future community of followers, largely through humility and servitude. He uses the parables of the wandering sheep and the unmerciful servant to illustrate his points. He warns them about not hindering entrance into the kingdom and on forgiveness.

Ch 23-25: **The Eschatological Discourse:** From the Mount of Olives, Jesus focuses on the "end times" and the judgment that will ultimately come. "Be ready" and "conduct yourself well" are common themes through parables offered by Jesus, such as the ten virgins, the bags of gold (also known as the parable of the talents), and the sheep and goats.

The remainder of the Gospel of Matthew details the last week in the life of Jesus, from entering Jerusalem in triumph to the last supper, his betrayal in the garden, and his arrest, torture, crucifixion, death, and resurrection. The story ends with the post-resurrection Jesus issuing his disciples what is known as the Great Commission, urging them to continue his work on earth to further the Kingdom of Heaven.

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matt 28:19-20).



The Setting of Matthew

The events in the book of Matthew take place almost entirely within the vicinity of Palestine, an area extending roughly from Caesarea Philippi in the north to Beersheba in the south. During this time it was ruled by the Roman Empire. The opening chapters describe events surrounding Jesus' birth in Judea, where Herod had been appointed king by the Romans. The closing chapters end with Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension during the rule of Pontius Pilate and the tetrarchs Antipas and Philip.

Themes of Matthew's Gospel (by Donald Hagner)

This is the story of Jesus of Nazareth, recorded by the apostle Matthew as a compelling witness that Jesus is the long-anticipated Messiah, who brought the kingdom of God to earth and is the prophesied fulfillment of God's promise of true peace and deliverance for both Jew and Gentile.

1. **Portrait of Jesus.**

Jesus is the true Messiah, Immanuel (God incarnate with his people), Son of God, King of Israel, and Lord of the church.
Matthew 1:1, 23; 2:2; 14:33; 16:16; 18:20; 21:5-9

2. **The bridge between Old and New Testaments.**

Jesus fulfills the hopes and promises of the OT through his messianic genealogy, fulfillment of OT prophecies, and fulfillment of the OT law. These bridging qualities may have been one reason Matthew was chosen to begin the NT canon. Another possible reason is that many in the early church thought that Matthew was the first Gospel written, and another is that it was personally written by an apostle, in contrast to Mark and Luke.

Matthew 1:1-17, 22-23; 2:4-5, 15, 17, 23; 5:17-20

3. Salvation-historical "particularism" and "universalism."

Matthew's Gospel traces God's continuing work of salvation within Israel ("particularism") and extends this saving work to all the peoples of the earth ("universalism"), through the person and work of Christ.

Matthew 10:5–6; 28:19

4. The new community of faith.

The early church included both Jewish and Gentile Christians. Matthew's Gospel would have encouraged them to transcend ethnic and cultural barriers to find unity in service to Jesus the Messiah as members of his universal church.

Matthew 11:28; 16:18–19; 28:19

5. The church is built and maintained by Jesus' continuing presence.

God's saving work in the present age is carried out chiefly by and through the church, which Jesus continues to build and inhabit. Anyone who responds to Jesus' call—whether Jew or Gentile, male or female, rich or poor, slave or free—is brought into the fellowship of his church to enjoy him and participate in the community of his kingdom.

Matthew 16:18; 18:15–20; 22:10; 28:20

6. A "great commission" for evangelism and mission.

Jesus' command to "make disciples of all nations" is found only in Matthew and has motivated countless believers to reach out to the lost with the good news of the gospel. As Jesus made disciples in his earthly ministry, he commissions his church to follow his example.

Matthew 28:19

7. Jesus' five discourses recorded in Matthew can be viewed as a manual on discipleship.

The presentation of five of Jesus' major discourses, addressed at least in part to his disciples, forms the most comprehensive collection of Jesus' instructional ministry found anywhere in Scripture. They paint a holistic picture of life lived in obedience to Christ, and the church has used them to instruct disciples through the ages.

Matthew chs. 5–7; 10; 13; 18–20; 24–25

What's On This Term:

October

- Wed 5th Central Prayer (at Neutral Bay)
- Sun 9th Kids Church Kick Off Term 4
Launch Term 4 sermon series – Matthew 8-12
- Mon 10th Playtime at Neutral Bay commences for Term 4
English for Living at Macquarie Park commences for Term 4
Wellbeing & Care Seminar – Conflict & Communication - Kirribilli
- Tue 11th Alpha Course launch for Term 4 (10 weeks)
Foundations Course commences for Term 4 (10 weeks)
- Wed 12th Everyday English commences for Term 4
- Thu 13th Playtime at Kirribilli commences for Term 4
Wellbeing & Care Seminar– Conflict & Communication – Macquarie Park
- Fri 14th Playtime at Macquarie Park commences for Term 4
Bridge Kids Friday commences for Term 4
Ignite commences for Term 4
Okay Parents seminar – Teens and Mental Health
- Sun 16th Baptism Information Session
- Mon 17th Men's Recharge event – an evening with Mike Baird
- Sun 23rd The Bridge Church Day Away
- Mon 24th Young Adults Gathering

November

Wed 2nd	Central Prayer (at Kirribilli)
Fri 4th	Square One Kids Camp (until Sun 6th)
Thu 17th	Men's Golf Day
Mon 21st	Young Adults Gathering
Sun 27th	Christmas Appeal Collection Day 1 Baptism Sunday

December

Sun 4th	Christmas Appeal Collection Day 2
Wed 7th	Central Prayer
Thu 8th	Gingerbread House Decorating
Fri 9th	Wreath Making Ignite Final Meeting for Term 4
Sat 10th	Gingerbread House Decorating with Kids
Sun 11th	Final Kids Church for Term 4 Greenway End of Year Christmas Celebration
w/c 12th	Final Playtimes, Everyday English, English for Living, Bridge Kids
Sun 18th	Carols in Church
Sat 24th	Christmas Eve services
Sun 25th	Christmas Day services Free Christmas Lunch (at Kirribilli)

Sermon 1: Matthew 8:1-22

Sunday 9th October

Bible readings:

Monday: Matthew 8:1-4

Tuesday: Matthew 8:5-13

Wednesday: Matthew 8:14-17

Thursday: Matthew 8:18-22

Friday: Matthew 8:1-22

Memory Verse:

Matthew 9:37-38 - "Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Connect Group Study 1

Matthew 8:1-22

Faith and Following - Week of 10th October

Read Matthew 8:1-17

What are some of the skeptical or cynical perspectives you have heard about Jesus' miracles? Why are people skeptical?

Jesus performed many miracles that aren't recorded in detail (see v. 16). Why do you think Matthew has chosen to record these specific ones? What do they show us?

What is so significant about the touch of Jesus in v. 3? What is ironic and surprising? Why do you think he was commanded to say nothing to anyone?

How does Jesus' 'touch' of the leper encourage you and teach you about your own salvation? How does it help us picture what will happen when we one day stand in Jesus' presence?

Why do Jesus' words have such power (v. 8)? How should this change our attitude to listening to Jesus' words in scripture?

What is Jesus saying about Israel in v. 10-12?

What does this tell us about the nature of true faith?

NOTES:

What would you say to a Christian who said, "I'm not sure if God will accept me into heaven, sometimes I feel like I don't have a strong enough faith"?

Some argue that v. 17 means that if you follow Jesus, you will not get cancer or some other illness. What would you say to such a person? What IS the point of this verse (see Isaiah 53:3-6)?

NOTES:

Read 8:18-22

What is Jesus' point when he responds to these people? What do we learn about following Jesus?

What relationships (or other things) in your life do you have that may challenge Jesus for 'top spot'? What could you do about this?

NOTES:

Pray

- Give thanks for Jesus' authority and also his compassion
- Pray that you would have faith in Jesus and be prepared to follow him.
- Pray that our fear of what we might lose, in worldly terms, will not stop us from embracing Jesus' blessings.

Sermon 2: Matthew 8:23-9:13

Sunday 16th October

Bible readings:

Monday: Matthew 8:23-27

Tuesday: Matthew 8:28-34

Wednesday: Matthew 9:1-8

Thursday: Matthew 9:9-13

Friday: Matthew 8:23-9:13

Memory Verse:

Matthew 9:37-38 - "Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Connect Group Study 2

Matthew 8:23-9:13

The Authority of Jesus - Week of 17th October

Can you think of any figures that are divisive today? What makes it so difficult to have a unified opinion of him/her?

Read Matthew 8:23-34

What do these two miracles have in common? What is different about them?

Verses 23-27 remind us of the providence of God: his perfect, ultimate control over all things- even the storm that shook the boat. How could this doctrine comfort you in the midst of your trials, difficulties, and suffering?

Are there any aspects of these miracles that you find challenging to believe? How does your reaction compare with the reaction of the disciples (v. 27) and the town (v. 34)?

What is revealed about demons' knowledge of Jesus in their speech in v. 29? Are there any words of caution for us?

NOTES:

Read Matthew 9:1-13

What was the expectation of the paralysed man and his friends when they brought him to Jesus? What did Jesus do instead (v. 2)? What does that reveal about Jesus' priority as opposed to theirs?

What is indicated by the Pharisees in how they react to Jesus in v. 3 and v. 11? Are their reactions understandable? What assumptions do they have about Jesus that need to be challenged?

Compare the reactions of the people to Jesus' actions in v. 8:27, 34; 9:8, 10. Why is Jesus such a divisive figure? How do you respond to Jesus and his actions?

Re-read v. 12-13. What did Jesus mean by his response to the Pharisees in v. 12? What may prevent people from believing that they are sick or that they are sinful? What may our lives look like if we believed that we need Jesus?

Do you see yourself as a Pharisee or a tax collector and sinner? What are their attitudes towards Jesus? What can we learn from them?

NOTES:

Pray

- Praise God for Jesus who has authority over the natural, supernatural and sins.
- Pray that we may always understand who Jesus truly is and will react with faith, not with suspicion, distrust, or rejection.

Sunday 23rd October

The Bridge Church Day Away

Bible readings:

Monday: Matthew 9:14-17

Tuesday: Matthew 9:18-26

Wednesday: Matthew 9:27-34

Thursday: Matthew 9:35-38

Friday: Matthew 9:14-38

Memory Verse:

Matthew 9:37-38 - "Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Connect Group Study 3

Matthew 9:14-36

The Compassion of Jesus - Week of 24th October

Read Matthew 9:14 - 36

Give your initial observations: What in this passage causes you to grow in your love and admiration for Jesus?

What is Jesus saying in v. 16-17?

Where do we see faith on display from the:

- Synagogue leader?
- Woman with bleeding?
- The blind man?

What do you see in this passage about:

- The authority of Jesus?
- The compassion of Jesus?

How has Jesus had compassion on you? How can you imitate Jesus' compassion?

What is the response of the Pharisees to Jesus' works (v. 34)? How is it illogical? How does it reflect the response of your friends/family to Jesus?

NOTES:

Read Ezekiel 34:1-15. What were the shepherds of Israel doing? What did God say he would do?

How do we see Ezekiel fulfilled in the words and character of Jesus in Matthew 9:35-36?

What comfort do you find in the image of Jesus as your shepherd? Meditate on Psalm 23 together.

What does it mean to be a worker for the harvest? In what ways is God calling you to be a worker in his harvest?

NOTES:

Sermon 3: Matthew 9:14-36

Sunday 30th October

Bible readings:

Monday: Matthew 10:1-15

Tuesday: Matthew 10:16-23

Wednesday: Matthew 10:24-31

Thursday: Matthew 10:32-42

Friday: Matthew 10:1-42

Memory Verse:

Matthew 9:37-38 - "Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Central Prayer

November meeting (Wednesday 2nd November)
at Kirribilli



Sermon 4: Matthew 9:35-10:23

Sunday 6th November

Bible readings:

Monday: Matthew 11:1-19

Tuesday: Matthew 11:20-24

Wednesday: Matthew 11:25-27

Thursday: Matthew 11:28-30

Friday: Matthew 11:1-30

Memory Verse:

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Connect Group Study 4

Matthew 9:35-10:23

Workers for the Harvest - Week of 7th November

What comes to mind when you think 'ministry'? What kind of things do you think it involves?

Read Matthew 9:35-10:23

How is Jesus' ministry summarised in v. 35? What was motivating his actions (v. 36)? What was his 'call to action' for his disciples when he saw them?

What picture comes to mind when the crowds are described as sheep without shepherds? Given Jesus' ministry in v. 35 and instructions in 10:7-8, what are their needs?

Why was healing such a big part of Jesus' (and the disciples') ministry? What do the healings demonstrate about Jesus?

Should we expect healings to be a prominent part of ministry now?

What do you think of Jesus calling the twelve to send out workers into his harvest field? Why would he need to do this when he is God's son? What does this show about the nature of proclaiming the kingdom of God?

What was expected of the town or village that were receiving the disciples' ministry (v. 9-15)? Is there anything surprising about Jesus' words regarding anyone inhospitable to those proclaiming Jesus?

What does hospitality look like for us in the modern world supporting those proclaiming Jesus? Are there any areas in which we can improve?

Do you ever feel 'weak' in ministry? How does v. 19-20 encourage you in these situations?

What is life expected to look like for workers of the harvest (10:16-23)? Given the difficult nature of their work, why would anyone do this work?

What comforts are offered amongst the hard words in 10:16-23?

What causes you to shrink back from wholeheartedly serving Jesus in the areas of your bold witness to the gospel, deeds of mercy, and support of other ministers of Christ? How might this passage be calling you toward a deeper engagement with Christ's mission in the world?

Pray

- Praise God for the importance of the message we have to share: the kingdom of heaven is near.
- Praise God that he will work alongside us to raise workers for the harvest.
- Pray that we may be able to whole heartedly support workers amongst us.
- Pray that we may consider increasing our involvement in the harvest.

Practical Suggestions:

- Prayerfully consider financially supporting our interns
- Sign up as a prayer supporter for Moore College or SMBC

Sermon 5: Matthew 10:24-42

Sunday 13th November

Bible readings:

Monday: Matthew 12:1-14

Tuesday: Matthew 12:15-21

Wednesday: Matthew 12:22-37

Thursday: Matthew 12:38-45

Friday: Matthew 12:46-50

Memory Verse:

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Connect Group Study 5

Matthew 10:24-42

The Mission and the Cost - Week of 14th November

Have you ever faced opposition in ministry? Or has ministry ever come at a cost to you or those around you? Share some of those stories with the group.

Why does Jesus say to not be afraid of slander (v. 24-27)?

What kind of slander have you faced today for following Jesus?

Why does Jesus say to not be afraid of physical persecution (v. 28-31)? What are we to fear instead?

"The remedy for fear of man is a proper fear of God". Do you agree? How can you let this truth impact your life?

What do you find comforting about v. 29-30? When have you experienced this care recently?

Do you believe that you are this valuable to God? When are you tempted to doubt it?

NOTES:

Read v. 34-38. Have you or someone you know experienced family division/conflict for following Jesus?

What could it look like in practice to love our family (or our life) more than Jesus?

What does it mean to 'take up your cross'? Why is it necessary to be a worthy follower of Jesus?

How does taking up our cross lead to us finding life?

Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. How does Paul's suffering while on mission fulfill Jesus' warnings in this passage? How can we learn from, and be encouraged by, the apostle Paul in his suffering?

Write down 2-3 areas of your life where Jesus is prompting you to 'take up your cross'.

NOTES:

Pray

- Pray for strength to boldly and sacrificially take up our cross to serve Jesus.
- Pray for courage to proclaim Jesus, even when doing so brings rejection or shame.
- Ask God for an eternal perspective, to remember the eternal reward that is ours.

Sermon 6: Matthew 11:1-24

Sunday 20th November

Bible readings:

Monday: Matthew 13:1-23

Tuesday: Matthew 13:24-30

Wednesday: Matthew 13:31-43

Thursday: Matthew 13:33-52

Friday: Matthew 13:53-58

Memory Verse:

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Connect Group Study 6

Matthew 11:1-24

Doubt, Miracles & Following Jesus -
Week of 21st November

Have you ever doubted or had questions about God, the bible or your own faith? What were the specific doubts or questions regarding? How did you overcome them (if you have)?

Read Matthew 11:1-24

Who was John the Baptist expecting (cf 3:11-12)? Read the promises of the coming day of salvation in Isaiah 29:18-19; 35:5-6 and 61:1. What similarities do these have with Jesus' answer to John in Matthew 11:4-5? Is this the answer that you would have expected?

Read Malachi 4:5-6. What did the coming of Elijah predict? What was expected to happen after his coming? If John the Baptist is the Elijah (v. 14), who is Jesus?

What do you think it means that John the Baptist is the greatest, yet not, in v. 11? What is the difference between John the Baptist's coming and the coming of the kingdom of heaven?

NOTES:

How did John the Baptist's generation respond to him (v. 18) and Jesus (v. 19)? How do you think our generation has responded to John the Baptist or Jesus?

Tyre, Sidon and Sodom are cities in the Old Testament that were severely judged for rebelling against God. What is the cause of Jesus' displeasure at Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum?

What is the place of miracles in our own faith? Should we expect to see the same miracles amongst us today?

What has Jesus declared about himself in Matthew 11:1-20? How would you use this passage to help a friend who is experiencing doubts about his/her faith?

NOTES:

Pray

- Praise God that Jesus is the long-awaited LORD, who brought sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, life to the dead and the good news to the poor.
- Pray that our hard-earned knowledge and love for Jesus will not be shaken or diminished by doubts.
- Pray for anyone that you know is experiencing doubts.

Sermon 7: Matthew 11:25-30

Sunday 27th November

Bible readings:

Monday: Matthew 14:1-12

Tuesday: Matthew 14:13-21

Wednesday: Matthew 14:22-36

Thursday: Matthew 15:1-20

Friday: Matthew 15:21-28

Memory Verse:

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Connect Group Study 7

Matthew 11:25-12:21

Rest & The Lordship of Jesus -
Week of 28th November

Read Matthew 11:25-30

What would you choose to do as your perfect day of rest? A holiday? The beach? The bush? A hobby? Others?

In v. 25-27, what does Jesus say about:

- a. God the father?
- b. himself?
- c. people?

Given what Jesus says here, how would you respond to someone who says, "We can't know what God is like"?

What does Jesus say he and his yoke are like? Is this your experience of the Christian life?

Who is Jesus' invitation to? Does it describe you?

NOTES:

Read Matthew 12:1-21

How does Jesus' yoke compare to the yoke of the Pharisees in 12:1-21?

Why does Jesus say the disciples are innocent?

Why, then, do the Pharisees say the disciples are doing what is unlawful? What have they failed to see?

How can we make the same mistake as the Pharisees?

How does our society normally pursue "rest for our souls"? How is this different from what Jesus is saying here?

Why are we sometimes so reluctant to come to Jesus, take his yoke upon ourselves and learn from him?

NOTES:

Sermon 8: Matthew 11:28-12:21

Sunday 4th December

Bible readings:

Monday: Matthew 15:29-39

Tuesday: Matthew 16:1-12

Wednesday: Matthew 16:13-20

Thursday: Matthew 16:21-28

Friday: Matthew 17:1-13

Memory Verse:

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Central Prayer

December meeting (Wednesday 7th December)



Sermon 9: Matthew 12:22-50

Sunday 11th December

Bible readings:

Monday: Matthew 17:14-23

Tuesday: Matthew 17:24-27

Wednesday: Matthew 18:1-9

Thursday: Matthew 18:10-20

Friday: Matthew 18:21-35

Memory Verse:

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Additional Notes:

What is one area you have changed in your thinking or actions, because of this series?

What is one question that you still have?

Giving at Church

God says, "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Almost all the operating expenses of our church are funded by the generosity of our parishioners, enabling us to support and grow our ministries, so we want to acknowledge our rich blessings. We've been blessed as one church, with 10 congregations in three locations.

We're experiencing the blessings of new people coming to church, renting buildings, resourcing new gatherings, and taking new people through our Belonging courses. Your generosity has brought the blessing of an online church presence every week, our YouTube channel, our social media, all our videos, communications, and marketing through enews, posters, banners, and these booklets!

We're able to resource our Explore courses and three Playtimes every week reaching over 100 families with the gospel as well as scripture in schools that teaches the good news about Jesus to over 300 children each week.

It's through your generosity that we're able to resource care and have the privilege of taking the gospel into Greenway community housing, spending time in aged care facilities and reaching those from other nations who come to Everyday English. Your generosity enables us to be a physical, pastoral presence in the lives of people.

We have the blessing of mission to the nations, we're able to support all our global mission partners to do life and ministry through your generosity.

We're able to have the blessing of our buildings – these beautiful, historic, yet costly buildings. And it's through your generosity that we have people who get to sit under the gospel and have their lives transformed by Jesus and the power of his Holy Spirit.

So, it really is better to give than to receive. Thank you for your continued and intentional generous giving.

<https://thebridgechurch.org.au/give>

Bank Account details

The Bridge Church

BSB: 032-099

Account number: 637189





The Bridge Church