

# FAITH@HOME GUIDE

May 3-9

*A resource to be used for Family or Individual worship this week. The daily readings are listed and a shorter option is in () if time is short. One item for discussion in addition to questions on guide that is always helpful is to have people pick out a verse they liked and explain why.*

## CONGREGATIONAL PRAYERS

**Prayers this week:** *Cristine Weber, sister of Joanne Walen*

**Cancer Care & Treatment:** *Sheila Finberg, Mark Thompson, Clara & Mike (family of Delores Volkens)*

**Confirmation Students:** *Wyatt Philabaum & Riley Plummer*

**Grieving Families:** *The families of Paul Wegner & Karen Reineke - Daniel's mom*

**Families as we go through our membership:** *Janet Kramin; Jennifer, Tyler Kranz; Kathryn Kranz; Lorraine Kubasta; Kerry Kuklok; Nicole, Kaleb Kulzer; Wayne, Sue Kulzer; Terry, Jennifer Kurash; Chris, Sheena, Joshua, Amber, James, Ethan, Madison, Aiden Kutzorik; Jerry, Corrine Lanz; Vivian Larsen; Barb Larson; Dawn Larson.*

### Questions to consider:

*Who is someone I will support or encourage this week? What can I do and how will I do it?*

*Who do I know that is disconnected from the Lord that I can pray for and share my faith with and possibly invite?*

### Things to Commit to Memory this Week

1. Jesus fed five thousand with this (Matt 14:13-21): **5 loaves and 2 fish**
2. The blind leaders of the blind (Matt 15:14): **the Pharisees**
3. "This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts...(Matt 15:8): **...are far from me.**"
4. Jesus gave him the name "rock" (Matt 16:18): **Peter**
5. These two appeared with Jesus at the Transfiguration. (Matt 17:1-8): **Moses and Elijah**
6. These three witnessed the Transfiguration: **Peter, James, and John**

7. He could not give up his wealth and follow Jesus (Matt 19:16-30) **the rich young ruler**
8. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than...(Matt 19:23-24): **...for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."**
9. The shepherd left the ninety-nine to find what? (Matt 18:12-14): **one lost sheep**
10. Only He knows the day and the hour of Christ's return to earth. (Matt 24:34-36): **the Father**

### **Monday May 4th—Reading Matthew 14-15 (14:1-12)**

In these chapters, Jesus performs iconic miracles, including the feeding of the five thousand and walking on water, while also facing the execution of John the Baptist by Herod. He challenges the legalism of the Pharisees by redefining purity as a matter of the heart rather than external rituals, emphasizing that what comes out of a person defiles them. The narrative culminates with Jesus demonstrating the inclusive reach of his ministry by healing the daughter of a Canaanite woman and feeding another multitude of four thousand people.

#### **Matthew 15:18 — The Heart's Output**

Jesus teaches that our words reveal our internal reality, acting as a thermometer for the heart. **What have your recent words or reactions revealed about the current state of your spiritual health?**

### **Tuesday May 5th—Reading Matthew 16-17 (16:1-12)**

In these chapters, Jesus reveals his identity as the Messiah to his disciples, leading Peter to make his famous confession of faith, which is immediately followed by Jesus' first explicit prediction of his death and resurrection. The narrative then shifts to the Transfiguration, where Jesus' divine glory is unveiled before Peter, James, and John on a high mountain alongside Moses and Elijah. Finally, Jesus reinforces the necessity of faith and humility, demonstrating his power by healing a demon-possessed boy and teaching his followers about the "mustard seed" faith required to move mountains.

#### **Matthew 16:15–16 — Personal Conviction**

Jesus asks the disciples who the crowds think He is, but then pivots to the most important question: "Who do *you* say I am?" Peter's correct answer marks a shift from following a popular teacher to following the Son

of God. **If you had to describe your personal relationship with Jesus right now in one sentence, who would you say He is to you?**

### **Wednesday May 6th—Reading Matthew 18-19 (18:21-35)**

In these chapters, Jesus redefines greatness by emphasizing humility, teaching that his followers must become like little children to enter the kingdom of heaven. He provides a roadmap for radical forgiveness and church discipline, illustrated by the parable of the unmerciful servant who was forgiven a massive debt but refused to show the same grace to others. Finally, Jesus addresses the costs and commitments of discipleship regarding marriage and wealth, famously telling a rich young ruler that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for those trusting in riches to enter God's kingdom.

#### **Matthew 18:21–22 — The Math of Forgiveness**

When Peter asks if forgiving someone seven times is enough, Jesus responds with "seventy-seven times," teaching that grace shouldn't be counted or limited. **Is there someone in your life you are "counting" offenses against, and how does remembering God's grace toward you help you let go?**

### **Thursday May 7th—Reading Matthew 20-21 (21:1-11)**

Jesus begins with the parable of the vineyard workers, teaching that God's grace is based on His generosity rather than human merit or "fairness." He then makes his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, fulfilling prophecy and receiving praise from the crowds, which he immediately follows by clearing the temple of moneychangers. The chapters conclude with Jesus engaging in intense debates with religious leaders, using parables like the two sons and the wicked tenants to warn that the kingdom of God will be given to those who actually produce its fruit.

#### **Matthew 20:26–28 — Greatness Through Service**

When the disciples argue about who will be most powerful, Jesus explains that in His kingdom, leadership is measured by sacrifice rather than status. **What is one practical, "behind-the-scenes" way you can serve someone this week without seeking any recognition for it?**

### **Friday May 8th—Reading Matthew 22-23 (23:1-39)**

Jesus presents the parable of the wedding banquet to illustrate that many are called to God's kingdom but few are chosen, while also silencing his

critics with the command to "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." He summarizes the entire law into the two greatest commandments: loving God with all one's heart and loving one's neighbor as oneself. The chapters conclude with a blistering series of "woes" against the Pharisees and scribes, where Jesus denounces their hypocrisy and warns of the judgment coming upon those who prioritize religious outward appearance over justice, mercy, and faithfulness.

### **Matthew 23:25–26 — Inside-Out Purity**

Jesus delivers a harsh "woe" to religious leaders who clean the outside of the cup while the inside is full of greed and self-indulgence. **How much energy do you spend making sure your "cup" looks clean to others compared to the energy you spend on your private, internal life with God?**

### **Saturday May 9th—Reading Matthew 24-25 (25:31-46)**

In these chapters, Jesus delivers the Olivet Discourse, describing the signs of the end of the age and his future return while warning his disciples to remain watchful and prepared. He uses parables like the ten virgins and the talents to emphasize that readiness involves not just waiting, but actively and faithfully using the resources God has entrusted to us. The section concludes with the vivid scene of the final judgment, where Jesus reveals that true discipleship is proven by how we care for "the least of these," as serving the needy is equivalent to serving Christ himself.

### **Matthew 25:21 — The Goal of Faithfulness**

The reward for the faithful servants wasn't just a "pat on the back," but an invitation to "enter into the joy of your master." **Do you tend to view spiritual growth more as a "job" to be finished or as a way to enter into God's "joy"?**

**Life Application Focus:** *3 summary points that come up in the week of readings. Write down another you came up with.*

1. Lose your life to truly find it.
2. Forgive others as you have been forgiven.
3. What hour? Stay Ready.
- 4.