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Introduction: Of the four gospel accounts given in the New Testament, perhaps none is more widely studied than the gospel of Matthew. It is fitting that God bridges the gap between Old and New Testaments with Matthew's gospel. As Irving Jensen writes, "Matthew is preeminently the gospel of fulfillment. The writer seeks to connect the memories of his readers with their hopes; to show that the Lord of the Christian was the Messiah of the Jew, the King of the promised kingdom."

More than any other gospel writer, Matthew pays special attention to Old Testament prophecy. At least fifteen times he explains how Jesus fulfilled a specific Old Testament prophecy, and more than forty times he quotes passages from the Old Testament. This intricate connection between Jesus and prophecy is one of several methods Matthew uses to present overwhelming evidence to the Jewish readers that Jesus was the promised Messiah. It is worth noting that God places this appeal to the Jews at the beginning of the New Testament. He therefore presents the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus to the Jews before presenting it to any other group of people. His patient, continued appeals to the Jewish nation are truly remarkable.

One of the unique characteristics of Matthew's gospel is the emphasis he places on the spoken words of Jesus—over half of the verses in the book contain His spoken words. Matthew records nine discourses of Jesus (five major and four minor)—our study will focus only on the major discourses. Since the book is written from a distinctly Jewish mindset, it is critical that we learn to see the text from the perspective of a first-century Jew if we want to grasp its full meaning. Some helpful hints for doing that:

1. Pay close attention to any Old Testament prophecies and scriptures you find in the text. What is the original context of these passages? What thoughts would these prophecies/scriptures bring to the Jewish mind?
2. Remember the Jewish expectations and misconceptions of the Messiah. After reading the interactions between Jesus and the Jews, how would they have viewed Him in light of these expectations?

A few other things to keep in mind as you study:

1. Most of the scriptures we examine will be texts that you have studied at some point in the past, therefore it will be easy to see only the things you have already seen from previous study. Challenge yourself to look for fresh, interesting details—things you have never seen before.
2. Spend your time primarily in the text at hand. Considering parallel texts in the other three gospels may be helpful at times, but try to focus more on

Matthew's account. Look for things in his presentation of the gospel that are unique to his account.

3. Try not to spend too much time bringing in outside references and proving points that are not specific to the text. Again, while these may be helpful at times, they can take away from the overall message Matthew presents and can lead to applications that are not consistent with the text.
4. Completely study the text of the lesson *first*, before answering any of the questions. Look for as many things as you can find in the text, observe as much as possible, and *then* move on to the questions. The questions are intended as a supplement to your initial observations, not as a starting point for the study.
5. A survey chart is included on page four of the workbook. Since we will only be covering eight chapters in the book of Matthew, don't worry about filling out the survey chart (unless you really want to). The chart is provided to help illustrate how each discourse fits into the overall flow of the book.
6. *Above all, enjoy the text! Eat it up! Love it!*

Lesson 1—The Sermon on the Mount, pt. 1

Directions for the textual worksheet: As you study the text, use colored pencils to mark the things you find interesting and important. Be prepared to share your findings in class. After studying the worksheet, answer the questions that follow.

5:1 And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him.

2 Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

5 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

1. What things do you find important in this text?

2. Remember that Matthew writes from a distinctly Jewish perspective. How do you think a Jew would have responded to Jesus' opening statement?

13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

3. What are some of your observations from the previous text?

17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

4. What is the implication of Jesus' statement in v. 17?

21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.'

22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.

23 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,

24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

25 Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison.

26 Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

27 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.'

28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

31 "Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.'

32 But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

33 "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.'

34 But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne;

35 nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.

36 Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black.

37 But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

38 "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.

41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.

42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?

48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

5. What do you find interesting in vv. 21-48?

6. What are some of the most important principles that Jesus teaches in this text? Considering vv. 21-48 as a whole, what underlying themes does Jesus repeatedly emphasize?

7. Look at the survey chart of Matthew. Notice that Matthew precedes each of the five major discourses with a narrative section that focuses on a distinct part of Jesus' ministry and kingship. How does the narrative section in chapters 3-4 relate to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount?

Lesson 2—The Sermon on the Mount, pt. 2

Directions for the textual worksheet: As you study the text, use colored pencils to mark the things you find interesting and important. Be prepared to share your findings in class. After studying the worksheet, answer the questions that follow.

6:1 "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

5 "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

7 And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.

8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

1. What are some of your observations from this text?

9 In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13 And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 "Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

2. From Jesus' words in vv. 5-15, what are some of the key ingredients to offering godly prayers?

3. What is the main point Jesus is trying to get across in vv. 1-18?

19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;
20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.

23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the

one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

25 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"

26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?"

28 "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"

31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

4. What are some of your observations from this text?

5. Explain the meaning of vv. 22-23.

6. Why is worrying such a dangerous thing for the citizen of God's kingdom?

7. Now try to think of the Sermon on the Mount as a whole. How does the message of chapter five connect to the message of chapter six?

Lesson 3—The Sermon on the Mount, pt. 3

Directions for the textual worksheet: As you study the text, use colored pencils to mark the things you find interesting and important. Be prepared to share your findings in class. Pay careful attention to how the flow of thought in chapter seven adds to Jesus' message in chapters five and six. After studying the worksheet, answer the questions that follow.

7:1 "Judge not, that you be not judged.

2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.

3 And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?

4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye?

5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

6 "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

1. Remember that chapters 5-7 were spoken as one continuous message—no chapters or verses to break up the flow of thought. With this in mind, how do vv. 1-6 fit in with the rest of Jesus' sermon?

2. What does v. 6 mean in the context of this passage?

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?
11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!
12 Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

3. What are some of your observations from vv. 1-12?

13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.
14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.
15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.
16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?
17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.
18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.
19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.
20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.
21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.
22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'
23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'
24 "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:
25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.
26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:

Lesson 4—Jesus Commissions the Twelve Apostles

Directions for the textual worksheet: As you study the text, use colored pencils to mark the things you find interesting and important. Be prepared to share your findings in class. After studying the worksheet, answer the questions that follow.

9:35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

38 Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

10:1 And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

4 Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans.

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

1. Jesus' command in vv. 5-6 is not found in any of the other three gospels. Why do you think Matthew chooses to include this small detail?

2. How are verses 7 and 8 connected?

9 Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts,
10 nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.
11 "Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out.
12 And when you go into a household, greet it.
13 If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.
14 And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.
15 Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!
16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.
17 But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues.
18 You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.
19 But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak;
20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.
21 "Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.
22 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.
23 When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

3. If you were teaching this class, what things would you emphasize in the previous text?

24 "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master.

25 It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!

26 Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.

27 "Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops.

28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.

30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

32 "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.

33 But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

4. What are some of the most important lessons we can learn from this text?

34 "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.

35 For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law';

36 and 'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.'

12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

13 Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

14 And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive;

15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.'

16 But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear;

17 for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

18 "Therefore hear the parable of the sower:

3. Why were the apostles given the knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom while the rest of the multitudes were not?

4. How does the context of the passage Jesus quotes in vv. 14-15 (Isaiah 6:9-10) apply to the Jewish audience?

19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

20 But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

22 Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

23 But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

5. What do you find interesting or important in Jesus' explanation of the parable of the sower?

Directions for the textual worksheet: As you study the text, use colored pencils to mark the things you find interesting and important. Be prepared to share your findings in class. After studying the worksheet, answer the questions that follow.

13:24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;

25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.

26 But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.

27 So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'

28 He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?'

29 But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.'""

1. What things do you find significant in the parable of the tares?

31 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field,

32 which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."

33 Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

34 All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them,

35 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world."

2. What is Jesus emphasizing about the kingdom of heaven in the previous two parables?

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

37 He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.

38 The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one.

39 The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

40 Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.

41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,

42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

3. What things do you find interesting or important in the previous text?

44 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls,

Lesson 7—Assorted Teachings of Jesus, pt. 1

Directions for the textual worksheet: As you study the text, use colored pencils to mark the things you find interesting and important. Be prepared to share your findings in class. After studying the worksheet, answer the questions that follow.

18:1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

2 Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them,

3 and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

4 Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.

6 "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!

1. What is it about a little child that makes such a powerful point in this text?

8 "If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire.

9 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.

10 "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.

2. When Jesus talks about "little ones" in this passage, to whom is He referring?

11 For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.

12 "What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying?

13 And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

3. How do vv. 11-14 relate to the rest of the text?

4. What other things do you find interesting or important in vv. 1-14?

Lesson 8—Assorted Teachings of Jesus, pt. 2

Directions for the textual worksheet: As you study the text, use colored pencils to mark the things you find interesting and important. Be prepared to share your findings in class. After studying the worksheet, answer the questions that follow.

18:15 "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.

16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.'

17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

18 "Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

19 "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

1. What are some of your observations from the previous text?

2. How do vv. 18-20 fit into the context of the rest of this passage?

21 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

24 And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.

Lesson 9—The Last Days of Jerusalem

Directions for the textual worksheet: As you study the text, use colored pencils to mark the things you find interesting and important. One of the main reasons we struggle to understand Matthew 24 is that Jesus speaks in apocalyptic language, a type of speech used frequently in the Old Testament to depict God's judgment of the wicked and deliverance of the righteous. Try to carefully consider how a Jew would have understood Jesus' words. Be prepared to share your findings in class. After studying the worksheet, answer the questions that follow.

24:1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.

5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.

6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

1. What do you find interesting or important in this text?

9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.

10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved.
14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.
15 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),
16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.
17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.
18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.
19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!
20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.
21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.
22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

2. The parenthetical warning recorded in v. 15 is not part of Jesus' original discourse—it was a warning that Matthew issued to his readers roughly thirty years after Christ's death. What did Matthew expect his readers to understand about v. 15?

23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.
24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.
25 See, I have told you beforehand.
26 "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.
27 For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.
28 For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

3. What are some of your observations from vv. 9-28?

29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

33 So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near — at the doors!

34 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

4. What are some of your observations from vv. 29-35?

36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

37 But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

40 Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.

41 Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.

42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

Lesson 10—The Importance of Preparation

Directions for the textual worksheet: Chapter 25 continues what was begun in chapter 24—the last of Jesus’ five major discourses in the book of Matthew. This address is probably being given on Tuesday, only three days before His crucifixion. Try to picture the tension building in Jerusalem and the urgency present in Jesus’ words as His final hours approach. As you study the text, use colored pencils to mark the things you find interesting and important. Be prepared to share your findings in class. After studying the worksheet, answer the questions that follow.

25:1 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,

4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'

7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

9 But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'

12 But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

1. What are some of your observations from the parable of the ten virgins?

14 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.

15 And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.

16 Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents.

17 And likewise he who had received two gained two more also.

18 But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.

19 After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

20 "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.'

21 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

22 He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.'

23 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

24 "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'

26 "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed.

27 So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.

28 So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.

29 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.

30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

2. What do you find interesting or important in the parable of the talents?

3. What do you think Jesus was trying to teach His disciples by telling these two parables? How do these two parables connect to the previous chapter?

31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;

36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?

38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?

39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

40 And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink;

