



## Reading through the New Testament—Week 1

January 8-14



Reading Plan available on YouVersion Bible App (QR Code).

Before you begin your New Testament reading, you may want to watch “The Bible Project: New Testament Overview”:

**[bibleproject.com/explore/video/new-testament-overview/](https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/new-testament-overview/)**.

The Bible Project has some excellent introductions to each book of the Bible. Matthew: **[bibleproject.com/explore/video/matthew/](https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/matthew/)**.

See also Andrew Peterson “**Matthew Begats**” on Youtube.com.

## ***Becoming*** more like Jesus—growing in His Word

### **The Gospel of Matthew – Introduction**

The New Testament begins with the Gospel according to St. Matthew. Matthew’s writings help to bridge the 400-year gap between the Old Testament and the New Testament (called the intertestamental period). Matthew writes primarily with a Jewish audience in mind to show Jesus as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

Matthew may be best known for being a tax collector, and as such, he likely kept accurate records. While his words were inspired by the Holy Spirit, what he wrote provides a very detailed and accurate account of the life, teachings, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Matthew was also one of the original twelve apostles and knew Jesus personally.

At the beginning of Mathew’s gospel, Jesus is given the name Immanuel, meaning “God with us” (1:23). At the end of Matthew’s gospel, Jesus sends his followers into the world with the promise, “I am with you always” (28:20). From beginning to end, it’s all about Jesus being with His people.

## THIS WEEK'S SERMON OUTLINE

### "This is My Family"

Matthew 1:1-17

*New Through the New Testament – Week 1*

Fly-over verses

"Why does Matthew begin with a genealogy?"

1. The genealogy of Jesus establishes the l\_\_\_\_\_ and b\_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus.
2. The genealogy of Jesus establishes that Jesus is a critical part of h\_\_\_\_\_ h\_\_\_\_\_.
3. The genealogy of Jesus establishes the r\_\_\_\_\_  
r\_\_\_\_\_ Jesus came in the first place.

What "skeletons" are there in your family's closet?

Jesus came to give you a new h\_\_\_\_\_ and a new s\_\_\_\_\_.

***"The heritage you have received is not nearly as important as the legacy you leave."***

What legacy do you want to leave for future generations?

### **New Testament in a Year—January 8-14**

Matthew

Chapter

1



2



3



4



5



## Additional Reflections from this week's reading . . .

Just as we heard about the genealogy of Jesus in this weekend's message, we all have our own genealogical history. **Who are some of the people in your life who are, or have been, your "spiritual ancestors" . . . those who have played a significant role in your life in passing on the faith?**

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*As you go about your reading this week and every week, look for ways God is making Himself known in your life.*

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The appearance of the Magi in Matthew 2 is called the Epiphany. The word "epiphany" means "to make known." With the visit of the Gentile Magi from the East, Jesus was literally made known to the whole world, both Jew and Gentile alike. As Lutheran Christians, we believe God makes Himself known to us in His Word and in His sacraments. As you go about your reading each week, look for ways God is making Himself known in your life.

With the calling of the first disciples in chapter 3, it seems like Simon Peter's and Andrew's response was pretty quick, "At once they left their nets and followed him" (3:20). Although you too are a follower of Jesus, **what are things that get in your way at times or that "slow you down" in living out your daily calling of following Jesus?**

The Beatitudes in Matthew 5 are not a list of blessings to try to achieve, but rather they are descriptions of the blessings all Christians have already received. Nevertheless, as you read the list of beatitudes **what are the areas where you might yet grow further in daily living out your faith?**

The reading section for this week concludes at the end of chapter 5 with the words, "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). As you think about those words, go back and read the angel's words to Joseph in chapter 1, "She (Mary) will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins" (1:21). Clearly God sent His Son because each one of us fall very short of being "perfect." Therefore, Jesus came to save us from our sins. **Give thanks today for the gift of Jesus**, the gift of salvation, the gift of God's love for you in your Savior, Jesus!

## *Belonging* in Community

Connect groups—which can include a group of Christians you meet with specifically for this purpose, your family, or a group you’ve already been meeting with—are communities where we intentionally share in our faith walk. Through commitment and presence in fellowship, discussion, and prayer, you will experience connection.

You are encouraged to discuss your group’s expectations on how often to meet and the type of community values you live out. Perhaps you’ve already done this, but now is a great time to revisit that and discuss how you can use this weekly guide in your group.

As we began in Matthew this week, we looked at the legacy of Jesus through his genealogy.

1. What is your legacy like? Who are the people in your family, what is their story? For some, the stories will be deep and go back for generations and others may know very little about their history. That’s ok. Our stories are unique for each of us and that is not a mistake. Don’t feel like you have to make things elaborate, but enjoy sharing and hearing from each other.
2. Where in the stories of your family members can you see God at work?
3. What do you see God doing in your part of the legacy?
4. A profound truth when we read about the Biblical family of the Israelites is that we have been adopted into this family. What does it mean to you that these stories are a part of your legacy as well?

PRAYER: Take time to share where you are at in faith and relationships. Then spend time in prayer for each other.

## *Blessing* the World

Jesus directs his disciples to “Go” in Matthew 28. (Jumping a little ahead, I know.) As we begin this journey of reading through the New Testament together and engaging in discussion within our connect groups and other community groups, we will also explore ways that we can “go” in our daily lives.

This means learning to listen to what God is speaking into our lives and processing a way to respond that impacts our community with God’s grace. It also means finding ways of joining the mission of God where it is already being lived out through our partners-in-ministry. Stay tuned for weekly opportunities to live out our mission of sharing God’s grace.