



Reading through the New Testament—Week 3

January 22-28, 2023



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

Have you missed a few days of reading? That's ok! You are forgiven. Feel free to read two chapters (hard copy plan) or two days (YouVersion Bible App) a day to catch up. Within the Reading Through the New Testament Bible App plan, click on the three dots in the top right hand side of the screen and press "catch me up." This matches the day in the plan with the current calendar date, eliminating the guilt of seeing how many days you have missed.

Becoming more like Jesus—growing in His Word

Jesus' Parables: A Working Definition

Excerpt from Concordia Commentary, Matthew 11:2-20:34 by Jeffery Gibbs

Looking at the Synoptics (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) does lead toward a common use of the term parable. In most of the cases, in these three Gospels, the term "parable" refers to a small pastime narrative that Jesus tells in order to communicate a deeper meaning. These stories communicate indirectly, that is allegorically. They are metaphors extended to the level of narratives (pg 665-666).

The reader who wishes to understand the message of Jesus' parable must remain open to finding both major themes as well as minor, supportive truths in a cluster of revelation (pg 667).

There are many aspects to Jesus' parables—from the big picture to the small nuggets. As you read, be open to hearing from God in both of these ways. The parables that Jesus shares with the people around him had meaning within their context and knowing that context helps us learn even more of the minor themes and revelations from the stories. To learn more about the culture context, ask Pastor Shawn or Pastor Goff to borrow Rev. Dr. Gibbs Concordia Commentaries on Matthew; we would be glad to share.

THIS WEEK'S SERMON OUTLINE

"Yeast and the Kingdom"

Today's Focus: Matthew 13:31-34

Reading Through the New Testament – Week 3

Stories Shape Us:

Math | Times Tales

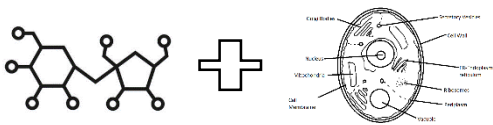
Mr W _____ & Mrs W _____ have 4 d _____ and 9 c _____

PARABLES

Earthly Story

"...like **yeast** that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of **flour** until it **worked all through the dough**."

Matthew 13:33



= CO₂ & Ethanol

A _____

S _____ & H _____

I _____

Heavenly Meaning

The **kingdom of heaven** is like...

Matthew 13:33

A _____

T _____

New Testament in a Year—January 22-28

Matthew

Chapter 11 12 13 14 15

Additional Reflections from this week's reading . . .

This week as you read, take note of the narratives or stories that stand out to you from each chapter. As you notice these stories, ask the question: What from this scripture connects with my life? Then pray: God, what are you speaking into my life through this reading?

Matthew 11

- 1.
- 2.

Matthew 12

- 1.
- 2.

Matthew 13

- 1.
- 2.

Matthew 14

- 1.
- 2.

Matthew 15

- 1.
- 2.

Do you see any patterns to what you noticed or in the answer to your prayers? If so, intentionally write them down and continue to pray about them on a daily basis asking that God's will be done.

Belonging in Community

Connect groups are communities—a group of Christians who meet together regularly—where we intentionally share in our faith walk. Through commitment and presence in fellowship, discussion, and prayer, you will experience connection.

Begin your time together by following up on anything that was shared during your last time together.

In Matthew 11:29, Jesus tells us to take His yoke upon us and learn from him. The next several chapters are various parables and lessons meant to help us learn to be like Jesus. The thing about learning is that we cannot learn while we are inside our comfort zone. Inside the comfort zone, things are known, familiar, and in control, which is why it is comfortable. However, that is also why we don't learn. Notice that in the lessons and parables, people are being pushed into uncomfortable thought processes and situations. As a group, let's begin to share where God may be bringing us into those uncomfortable, unknown, unfamiliar, and seemingly chaotic places of learning.

- What is an area in your life that you are uncomfortable with?
- Do you see where you may be able to grow in this situation? If not, that is ok. Maybe someone in the group has insight for you.
- As you think of what God may be doing, how do you feel about it? It is very normal and acceptable if you aren't feeling great about it. Fear, anger, annoyance and more are all reactions that we can have when we are learning. Sometimes we forget this, especially as adults. We have fallen for the lie that learning should be easier by now. It's not. Being honest and real with our reactions is a healthy thing. And sharing with your group is a great way to let fellow Christians walk with you.
- As you hear your friends in the group sharing, what words of hope, comfort, and/or guidance can you share? Be sure to do this from a place of listening first. You are not trying to solve the "problem" but come with wisdom and empathy.

Take some time to boldly pray for each other.

Blessing the World

We see through the lives of the disciples and the stories of Jesus that they connect with the people who were walking alongside them. Think about three people (and write down their initials) in your life who you walk alongside and pray for them:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

God, use me to be your hands and feet to _____ this week. Amen.