Introduction to the Study of Matthew

Dear Women of the Word,

I am so excited to be studying the book of Matthew with you this year! Each year as we study different parts of God’s word, he tailors it to be exactly what we need! It will be so sweet to spend a year and a half immersed in the life of Jesus. And everything we have studied in the past will make this study that much richer. On the other hand, if you are new to studying God’s word, Matthew is a wonderful place to start! Welcome!

There are a few things you need to know as you begin this study:

All Scripture quoted is ESV unless otherwise noted. The questions are also based on the ESV unless noted.

Matthew is writing his gospel to a primarily Jewish audience. He is presenting Jesus as the long awaited Messiah, the King who is the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises. The gospel of Matthew therefore, ties the Old Testament to the New Testament in the person of Jesus, who is the climax of the story and the fulfillment of the promises. Matthew weaves Old Testament quotes and allusions throughout his gospel. The Old Testament is central in Matthew more than any other gospel and vital in understanding Jesus, so in this study, **Old Testament Ties** will help us better see who Jesus is as the completion of the Old Testament story and the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises.

The **Digging Deeper** questions take you to a different part of the Bible and will give added understanding to the subject at hand. If you are running short on time these are the questions you can skip.

The **Heart** questions require some inner examination and reflection. They help you apply God’s word to your own life.

The **Scholar’s Notes** and **Picture and Ponder** help to clarify and deepen understanding and application.

**For Discussion** are questions that are conducive to brainstorming, though you should give them some thought before group time. The answers aren’t found directly in the passage, but relate to it.

Each year my prayer for you is that this study will not only be an intellectual exercise, but that it will be devotional—that it will engage your heart as well as your mind. The whole point of Bible study is to know God and love him! Growing in our relationship with God involves two-way conversation. As God speaks to us through his word he invites us to respond to him through prayer. So, interspersed throughout the study are boxes with arrows pointing up, prompting us to respond to God in praise, thanksgiving, confession and requests. Make these prayers your own or use them as a reminder to respond to what God is speaking to you.

For those of you who love to study and have some extra time, **Off the Beaten Path** are rabbit trails I couldn’t resist taking. They are completely extra and if you don’t have the time or inclination to go off the beaten path you will not miss anything that Matthew wanted you to know.

Each lesson always ends with **One Thing**. It is taken from Psalm 27:4 where David distills his desire down to one thing. For our purposes, *One Thing* is a way to distill the lesson for that week down to at least one thing you can remember and take with you. This year it will be especially important to complete because our study of Matthew will carry over into the Fall of next year and it will be a good tool for review.

One last bit of information that will hopefully make life a little easier. If you are absent on a day we hand out lessons, you can now go to my website and print off the lesson you need at Inhimallthings.org

Lastly, remember that the aim of our study is not to get every answer perfect, but to think, learn, discuss and search God’s word together all in order to know and love God better.

I am praying dear sisters that as we study the book of Matthew, we will grow in our understanding of, love for and devotion to Jesus our Savior and that he will reign supreme in each of our lives as our one true King.

In Him,

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