



Dear Friends,

Summer gives us the opportunity to take a break from our regular schedules and routines and enjoy less structure in our days. We all know how easy it is to let that lazy, hazy summer attitude seep into our regular time with God- but don't let these summer days be wasted! Use this time to sharpen your study skills and pursue God on your own. Here are two options for you to keep you planted in the book of Matthew so that when we pick up in the Fall with the remainder of Matthew you will be ready to go! (This would also be helpful to anyone who would like to join in the Fall but wasn't here this year.)

Whichever option you choose, or if you pursue a different book of the Bible that you have been wanting to explore, remember that to engage our hearts as we study we must respond to God- he speaks to us in his word, we answer in prayer. Two-way conversation makes it a relationship, and the goal of studying the Bible has everything to do with our relationship with God- we want to know God better, love him more deeply and follow him more closely. Happy Summer!

Love Holli

## *Option 1: Summer in the Sermon on the Mount*

### MATTHEW 5-7

We only had 4 weeks in the Sermon on the Mount and we needed so much more! So here is your chance to spend some more time with these precious words of Jesus.

In a notebook or journal take notes according to the method below. You could break up the chapters like this:

June- Chapter 5

July- Chapter 6

August- Chapter 7

Then take each chapter in smaller sections of verses each week, in order or concentrating on particular sections that you want to focus on. For example, the first week in June work on 5:1-12 doing #'s 1, 2 and 3 below for that section of verses, the next week take the next section of verses etc. Or break it up any way that makes sense to you or focus on any part your heart is drawn to. (You don't have to do all the bullet points for #'s 1 and 2.)

1. Read to discover what it says (Comprehension)
  - Look for details, patterns, repetitions and themes
  - Read in different translations
  - Look up word meanings, write an outline,
2. Read to discover what it means (Interpretation)
  - Look up cross references
  - Paraphrase- write sections or verses in your own words
  - Use a commentary (only after you have wrestled the text yourself)
3. Read to discover how to apply it (Application)
  - How is the character and work of God shown in this portion of scripture?
  - Respond in prayer- Do I apply this scripture to my life by praising God, by repenting of sin, by asking him for help to believe, trust, obey and act, or by yielding to his will and surrendering mine.
4. Memorize the Beatitudes (vs. 5-12)

## *Option 2: Summer Survey of Matthew 1-20*

1. Each week this summer read 2 chapters of Matthew.
  - Read the chapter once, then read it again, praying through the chapter responding with praise, repentance, asking God for what you need and yeilding to God's will. (P.R.A.Y)
2. In a journal or notebook keep a page for each chapter. Review our study lessons by looking back at the Heart questions and One Thing and write down what you want to remember from that chapter.
3. For those of you who think visually and are up for a fun challenge, draw a symbol for each chapter. Choose a symbol that helps you remember what the chapter is about. Some chapters might be easily represented by one symbol, other chapters will have a few possibilities. (Chapter one could be a tree symbolizing the genealogy, chapter 2 could be a star symbolizing the wise men. You get the idea!)
4. Pick a verse each month that has really spoken to you from your reading and memorize it. The more we can meditate on God's word by memorizing, the more riches we will see in it and the more it will be integrated into our lives!