



An Eyewitness Account

The Book of Matthew

FOLLOWER

THE SEVEN MARKS OF A DISCIPLE



LOVE RADICALLY



WORSHIP PASSIONATELY



ENGAGE SCRIPTURE



PRAY FERVENTLY



SERVE JOYFULLY



GIVE GENEROUSLY



MAKE DISCIPLES

mountaintopchurch.com

Dear Mountaintop Church Family,

I'm so excited to begin this journey with you. It's one of the most exciting Biblical journeys a Follower of Christ can take. We're on a path to learn about Jesus. We have four accounts (we call them gospels) of the life and ministry of Jesus: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Just like if you and I were to tell stories about a similar event that we'd been a part of, the gospel writers offer unique perspectives. They all have accounts of Jesus' death and resurrection, along with some other major events or miracles. Nevertheless, as you dig deep in the scriptures, you find that some stories are only told by one of the gospel writers. What was it about that story that stood out to that particular author? Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, what were they trying to tell us with their unique perspective?

This is an opportunity to Engage Scripture at a deeper level. Over the next four years, my hope is that you'll have read through each gospel as we study it together and look at its unique narrative. Then, in the fifth year, we'll look at stories and events that crossover between many of the gospels. This is an opportunity to grow in our understanding of the life and ministry of our Savior.

2022 – Jesus: An Eyewitness Account (Matthew)

2023 – Jesus: From the Friend of a Friend (Mark)

2024 – Jesus: A Research Project (Luke)

2025 – Jesus: The Storyteller (John)

2026 – Jesus: The Crossovers

So, let's get ready to dig into the Gospel of Matthew and see what the Lord has to teach us. I can't wait to see what God does!

In Christ,

Carter McInnis
Lead Pastor



FREE RESOURCES

Paper Bible

If you do not have a Bible, please feel free to take one as you enter or leave the Mountaintop Church Auditorium. It is our gift to you.

Digital Bible

You can take the Bible with you wherever you go with these websites and free apps for your phone or tablet.



Bible.com
BibleGateway.com



You'll find a Kid's Bible available at:
BibleAppForKids.com



More In-depth Study:
Easily search commentaries and translations.
BlueLetterBible.org



Olive Tree Bible Software
OliveTree.com

Sunday Messages

Every Sunday morning message is archived on the Mountaintop Website. So, if you miss a message or want to share a message with a friend go to **MountaintopChurch.com/watch** to view messages on-demand.

JESUS

Volume 1: An Eyewitness Account

How to use this booklet:

This is the first volume in a 5-issue mini-series. What lies ahead is an eyewitness account from the perspective of Matthew. The panels ahead unfold the life events of our main character, Jesus.

This is the first part in a much wider story arc, spanning five years and four unique authors to tell one incredible story, all with the purpose of giving us one more glimpse of the man at the center of it all: JESUS.

This particular volume is designed to be your companion on a 6-week journey through the first gospel. Each week begins with the verses included in that week's Sunday morning message along with a place to take notes on the teaching.

The following pages outline a series of readings spread out over four days. Read these passages throughout the week along with the short devotional thought included.

Engage with the Scripture and reflect on what impact it might have in your life. After all, you aren't just a reader. The book that contains these stories has a life of its own and it beckons you into it.

You are a character in the story that unfolds. You have a role to play. So, let's jump in...

Week 1

Matthew 5: 1-16

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

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

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

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

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

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

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Salt and Light

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

NOTES

Bottom line: You are **blessed to be a blessing.**

Week 1, Day 1

Read: Matthew Chapter 1-2

Read and reflect.

Matthew begins by making the case that Jesus is the Messiah, the savior of Israel. Take note that his genealogy stretches back to Abraham. Not only is Jesus from the line of David, but he is the fulfillment of the purpose of Israel to “bless the nations.” You’ll find in these verses six references to the prophets. The point is clear: The one promised to us has come, God is with us!

NOTES:

Week 1, Day 2

Read: Matthew Chapter 3

Read and reflect.

John the Baptist is a strange man, but one with a crucial message. With camel hair on his back and locusts on his breath, he announces that “the kingdom of heaven has come near.” Get used to this phrase, Matthew will use it 33 times! His emphasis is clear, Jesus Christ is King. As we will learn in the rest of the book, the kingdom that he brought near lives on through the lives of kingdom citizens in the present age.

NOTES:

Week 1, Day 3

Read: Matthew Chapter 4

Read and reflect.

Jesus’ 40 days in the wilderness is a popular story about standing up under temptation. However, there is more to be seen here. This scene, on the heels of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan river and His deliverance from Egypt, should clue us in to Matthew’s purpose. He is drawing correlations between Jesus and another famous figure from Israel’s history, Moses. Not only is Jesus the embodiment of Israel’s purpose and the promised Messiah, but he is also the new Moses. Jesus is the deliverer who saves from sin and establishes a new covenant.

NOTES:

Week 1, Day 4

Read: Matthew Chapter 5-6

Read and reflect.

This is the first half of the Sermon on the Mount. It lays out what it means to live as people of the kingdom that Jesus established. Kingdom people radically love their enemies, keep their promises, serve joyfully by giving to the needy, give generously by storing up treasures in heaven, and pray fervently for the kingdom to come in their own lives. We are kingdom citizens, sent as the light of the world. Reference the marks of a follower on the inside cover and consider some ways you can live them out this week.

NOTES:

*There is additional space for notes in the back of this booklet.

Week 2

Matthew 11:28-30

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

NOTES

NOTES

Bottom line:
Jesus made the **hardest** thing in the world
the **easiest** thing in the world.

Week 2, Day 1

Read: Matthew Chapter 7

Read and reflect.

Matthew 7 is the conclusion of the Sermon you began reading last week. After you read today, take a few moments to pray and use verses 7–8 to guide your time. Maybe there is something that you need. Ask for it. Perhaps you are seeking direction on a big decision or looming transition. Seek God's heart. Or is there a door that needs to be opened in your life? A simple knock will do. Remember, our God is in the business of opening doors, giving gifts, and being found. Will you trust that the door He chooses to open, the gift that He gives, and the way that He reveals Himself to you are only and always for your good?

NOTES:

Week 2, Day 2

Read: Matthew Chapter 8-9

Read and reflect.

These two chapters hit us with a barrage of miracles. The kingdom of heaven comes with a power that is out of this world. But it also comes with a responsibility. If we want access to this power, we must be willing to follow Jesus anywhere. The end of chapter 9 tells us that, "the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." There is no shortage of people who need to experience the hope of the kingdom of heaven. The question is: Are we willing to bring it to them? Find an empty space in this booklet and write down a few ways that God might be calling you to join the work force. How can you make a difference for the kingdom in your sphere of influence?

NOTES:

Week 2, Day 3

Read: Matthew Chapter 10

Read and reflect.

When you really think about this chapter, it tells the story of the beginning of the church. Jesus sends out His disciples to expand the reach of the kingdom of heaven into their communities. Jesus prepares them to experience both acceptance and resistance. He is clear that they must count the cost of following Him. Here is the beautiful thing about Jesus' kingdom, when you lose your life for the sake of the mission, that's when you truly find it. How might following Jesus cost you something? What does it look like to realign your life around His mission?

NOTES:

Week 2, Day 4

Read: Matthew Chapter 11

Read and reflect.

This chapter opens with John in prison sending a message to Jesus asking if he was right about him. It appears that some time in prison has caused even John to doubt the message of the kingdom. The reality is sometimes life can cause us to doubt. Our circumstances can drown out the voice of God in our life. The darkness can conceal the light. When life gets heavy, we get weary. Ask God to give you rest this week and remind you that He is who He says He is.

NOTES:

*There is additional space for notes in the back of this booklet.

Week 3

Matthew 13:44-52

The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.”

The Parable of the Net

“Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

“Have you understood all these things?” Jesus asked.

“Yes,” they replied.

He said to them, “Therefore every teacher of the law who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”

NOTES

Bottom line:

The kingdom of heaven is worth everything, cost God everything, comes for everyone, but only keeps the righteous ones in Christ.

Week 3, Day 1

Read: Matthew Chapter 12

Read and reflect.

Matthew 12:7 is the second time that our author has quoted Hosea 6:6, "God desires mercy, not sacrifice." Each time it is within the context of a story about the religious leaders using the law to keep someone from experiencing the kingdom. In what ways are we guilty of the same? How do we allow our religiosity to stand in the way of God's purposes? God's desire is to stretch out the things in our lives that have withered. If you've shrunk the gospel down to rules in restrictions, ask that God expand your heart once more to see the riches of His mercy.

NOTES:

Week 3, Day 2

Read: Matthew Chapter 13

Read and reflect.

One of my greatest fears is that I would be in the group that Jesus condemns in this chapter: those that fail to truly see the kingdom and understand God's heart. Take some time today and invite God to work on your soil. Pray that He gives you deep roots so that you can stand up under trial and temptation. This passage reveals to us that one of the ways we can be sure we have truly heard and seen the kingdom is by the fruit that we produce. Write down a few ways that you see the fruit of kingdom living present in your life.

NOTES:

Week 3, Day 3

Read: Matthew Chapter 14

Read and reflect.

This chapter begins with a gruesome scene. John's death begins to show us how the tension between the kingdom of heaven and the world of the religious leaders is coming to a head. John's beheading is the first realization of the plot to kill Jesus and usurp the kingdom He has been announcing. Yet, here is Jesus performing two of His greatest miracles. The point is, Jesus always sustains, and He continues making a way. When the outlook is bleak, look up. God is still doing miracles.

NOTES:

Week 3, Day 4

Read: Matthew Chapter 15

Read and reflect.

Lodged in the center of this chapter is an unlikely hero. A Canaanite woman praised for her faith. Here's what you need to know: Canaan is enemy number one. No nation was responsible for more death and destruction in Israel's history than Canaan. So, why would Jesus honor the faith of this woman? In fact, this seems to be a trend. Matthew is constantly pointing out the faith of unlikely people (a Roman centurion, tax collectors, the poor). The reality is the kingdom of heaven is an upside down kingdom. Those you think would be furthest from the throne are treated like royalty and given a seat at the table. Isn't it good news that even when we were enemies of God, He welcomed us to the family?

NOTES:

*There is additional space for notes in the back of this booklet.

Week 4

Matthew 18:23–35

“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

“At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

“His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

NOTES

Bottom line: Forgiveness doesn't stop with me.

Week 4, Day 1

Read: Matthew Chapter 16

Read and reflect.

In the span of six verses, Peter exhibits a remarkable ability to go from standing tall to putting his foot in his mouth. How do you move from “blessed are you” to “get out of my way” in just the space of a paragraph? The text tells us it’s pretty simple: Just concern yourself with human matters and lose sight of the kingdom. Here’s the hard truth: It is possible to know Jesus and stand in the way of His mission. The key to the kingdom of heaven is that it comes through sacrifice and service. In our humanity, we want the riches of the kingdom without the loss of our life. But if we are going to follow Jesus and take part in the kingdom, it’s time we die to our own way of doing things and take up His way. That is truly life.

NOTES:

Week 4, Day 2

Read: Matthew Chapter 17

Read and reflect.

Staring directly at the sun can do irreparable damage to your eyes. It is over 92 million miles away but it is powerful enough to affect your vision. Jesus shines like the sun in the presence of three of His disciples. Imagine that same power of the sun, on display just feet from your face. However, instead of damaging the eyes of the disciples this vision gives them new eyes. A fresh perspective to see that Jesus is indeed the Messiah, the son of God. Verse 8 says, “When they looked up, they saw no one expect Jesus.” Make this your prayer today, that you would see no one but Jesus and that He would be your sole focus.

NOTES:

Week 4, Day 3

Read: Matthew Chapter 18

Read and reflect.

This chapter begins Jesus’ fourth teaching in the book of Matthew. It is here that He lays out his vision for the upside down kingdom. The least are the greatest, the kingdom belongs to the lowly, the poor are given value, the last are first, and the blind truly see. What a paradox! This is what it means to see through a kingdom lens. Use a blank space in this booklet to write a thank you letter to God for flipping the script and pursuing you when you were the one sheep wandering away from the flock.

NOTES:

Week 4, Day 4

Read: Matthew Chapter 19

Read and reflect.

Have you ever attempted to pass a camel through the eye of a needle? No, it sounds ridiculous right! This is the image Jesus gives of a rich person attempting to enter the kingdom of heaven. Why is it that the things we have and hold make it so difficult to participate in the kingdom? It’s because serving in the kingdom means coming with empty hands and giving everything that we have to follow Jesus. This is why we emphasize giving generously as a mark of a follower. Not because we think all the stuff we possess is sinful, but because we believe Jesus when He says there is true life in seeing all that we have as belonging to the kingdom. How might Jesus want to free you from the burden of having more? What might happen if you begin to see your finances as a tool for kingdom work?

NOTES:

*There is additional space for notes in the back of this booklet.

Week 5

Matthew 20:1-16

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

"About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went.

"He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

"'Because no one has hired us,' they answered.

"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'

"The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. 'These who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'

"But he answered one of them, 'I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'

"So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

NOTES

Bottom line:
Grace puts everyone in **last place**
and then invites everyone to **first place**.

Week 5, Day 1

Read: Matthew Chapter 20

Read and reflect.

As you read this chapter today, consider the contrast between the requests of the two disciples and that of the two blind men. The mother of James and John is concerned with where they are going to rank in the kingdom. The blind men are satisfied to simply see it. Jesus' question to both is the same: "What do you want?" So, what is it going to be? Are we convinced we deserve the favor of God? Or are we humble enough to see our desperate need for his mercy? Let's be satisfied that because of Jesus we get to see the kingdom even when we don't deserve it and sacrifice our desire for the kingdom to satisfy our need to earn some sort of approval.

NOTES:

Week 5, Day 2

Read: Matthew Chapter 21

Read and reflect.

Now we are getting serious. The tension that has been boiling under the surface of the entire narrative is finally bubbling over. Jesus has been calling out the power structures of Jerusalem for the entire book and now he has arrived in that very city. What could possibly go wrong? Jesus makes a quick pit-stop at the Temple and turns over the tables. It's easy to look at this story and celebrate the truth hammer that Jesus brings down on the religious leaders and money changers. But notice that Jesus' truth is always measured with grace. After driving out the wrongdoers, He takes the time to heal the blind and lame. He turns the tables for the purposes of restoring them to their original use. The temple is to be a place of healing for all, the grace of Jesus makes sure of it.

NOTES:

Week 5, Day 3

Read: Matthew Chapter 22

Read and reflect.

In this chapter, the Pharisees and Sadducees team up on Jesus trying to trap him in a debate so that they can find grounds for trying him in the temple court. Spoiler Alert: using scripture to test the very Word of God is a losing strategy. At the end of the chapter Matthew declares, "from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions." Jesus has more answers than we have questions. Even your deepest doubts and most troubling questions are no match for the Son of God. Feel free to write some of them down here. You can't stump Him.

NOTES:

Week 5, Day 4

Read: Matthew Chapter 23-24

Read and reflect.

Here we are at the fifth and final teaching of Jesus. This is ultimately what gets Jesus killed. He is coming directly for the religious leaders and calling them out by name. This is the ultimate picture of Jesus supplanting Moses. Jesus condemns these religious leaders who sit in the seat of Moses because they "tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them." Contrast this with Jesus' easy yoke and lightening of burdens and you begin to see the true hope of the kingdom. Only Jesus has the power to lift a finger and satisfy the law. He comes teaching a new law: trust in Him as the fulfillment of Moses' law and you will be free.

NOTES:

*There is additional space for notes in the back of this booklet.

Week 6

Matthew 25:31-46

The Sheep and the Goats

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

"They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

"He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

"Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

NOTES

Bottom line:
How we treat the **least** is how we treat the **Lord**.

Week 6, Day 1

Read: Matthew Chapter 25

Read and reflect.

As followers of Jesus we long eagerly for Him to return and restore once and for all, everything that is so broken in this world. Matthew 25 seeks to answer the question: What does it look like to live faithfully while we wait for a future reality? The answer is striking. We are called to persevere in our kingdom work always being prepared for Christ's return. However, this means taking on a posture of service rather than security. We are encouraged through two parables not to rest on our laurels, but to sacrifice all that we have until the very end. Our love for the King is defined by faithful and untiring service to the kingdom.

NOTES:

Week 6, Day 2

Read: Matthew Chapter 26

Read and reflect.

We are nearing the end. As Jesus heads toward his predicted death, He shares one last meal with His followers. On either side of the Last Supper, are two betrayers: Judas and Peter. Notice that both of them have a seat at the table, both are given access to the bread of life and the cup of forgiveness. We have all betrayed God. No matter what we've done, God's grace is enough. Like He did with Judas, Jesus knows what we've done in the past and He still welcomes us to the table. As with Peter, Jesus is well aware of how we might turn our backs on Him in the future, but still He whispers "this meal is for you."

NOTES:

Week 6, Day 3

Read: Matthew Chapter 27

Read and reflect.

Here again we have Matthew drawing our attention to another unlikely character – the Centurion at the cross – placing his trust in Jesus as the Son of God. Contrast this to the religious elite in verse 41 who needed Jesus to come down off the cross and save Himself in order to believe. They wanted a conquering king instead of a suffering servant. What they failed to recognize is that in staying there on that cross, Jesus was willing to lose His own life because His heart was set on the life of that Roman Centurion. The religious leaders miscalculated the depth of God's love. May we not miss it. May we say, with the Centurion, surely this man who gave his life for all on a rugged Roman cross is the Son of God.

NOTES:

Week 6, Day 4

Read: Matthew Chapter 28

Read and reflect.

Jesus, the new Moses, stands on a mountain and tells the people where to go. Jesus, the king of a new kind of kingdom, claims all authority in heaven and on Earth. Jesus, the new Abraham, sends the disciples to take the gospel as a blessing into all the nations. Jesus, Immanuel, God with us, claims that He will be with them always, to the very end of the age. This is the resurrected Jesus who defeated death; the Messiah who teaches us to give our lives for the kingdom of heaven. The Son of God who brings the plan of God's redemption to rest. If you believe this then, the same power that rose Jesus from the grave is available to you. You are now a part of God's redemption plan. How is Jesus sending you to make disciples?

NOTES:

*There is additional space for notes in the back of this booklet.

Good Friday

Matthew 27:33–56

They came to a place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”). There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. Above his head they placed the written charge against him: this is Jesus, the king of the Jews.

Two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, “You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!” In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! He’s the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).

When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.”

Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. The rest said, “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him.”

And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.

They came out of the tombs after Jesus’ resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God!”

Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

NOTES

Bottom line:

Sometimes the miracle happens after the thing we didn’t want to happen.

Easter Sunday

Matthew 27:57-66

The Burial of Jesus

As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb.

The Guard at the Tomb

The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first."

"Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

Matthew 28:1-10

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him.

Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

NOTES

NOTES

1

FOR ONE
Reach Out

2

FOR EACH OTHER
Seek Unity in Christ

3

HOSPITALITY
Make Room

4

EXCELLENCE
Bring our Best

5

GENEROSITY
Give Well

6/7

GRACE AND TRUTH
Lead with Love

OUR VALUES



MOUNTAINTOP
CHURCH



A Five Year Journey