

DAY 1

READ MATTHEW 1

Mary and Joseph must have been scared and worried about what was to come. The news they had been given was not easy to hear and even harder to believe. They had to trust in God and have patience for Him to work. As you begin this 52 day journey to grow closer to God, you too must have trust that God wants to work in and through you. He has entrusted much talent and responsibility to you. There will be times that you will not understand what God is doing to accomplish His will through you, times may be hard, but you must be patient and have faith.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

HAVE FAITH

DAY 2

READ MATTHEW 2

When someone is chosen by God and chooses to live for His purposes, Satan immediately begins to try to destroy the effort before it ever gets started. He tried to do that through Herod when Jesus was a baby, and he will try to do it with you. Satan has already begun to interrupt your life and remove your focus from this great quest that you are on with God. Satan may try to use people or circumstances or he may simply count on your busy schedule. You need to actively look for Satan's distractions and choose to run from them! Avoid temptation and pray for strength today as you nurture your connection with the Lord.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

FLEE EVIL

DAY 3

READ MATTHEW 3 & 4

God always prepares the way for His people. He used John to prepare the people's hearts to hear and accept the message of Christ, and he has been preparing you for this special journey. Jesus called the disciples to leave everything behind and he's calling you to do the same. He wants you to abandon your dreams and desires to Him— giving up control of your own life to that of his masterful hand. He has His own plans for you— plans much better than you can currently imagine! Even now He is preparing you for those plans... but these plans aren't some far off distant thing— they are a current urgent reality!

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

FOLLOW HIM

DAY 4

READ MATTHEW 5 & 6

Jesus showed that following God wasn't about following a bunch of rules. He showed that it was all about loving Him and because of that love, loving everyone else with the highest priority. He taught that the little things matter and that they quickly add up to big things. We are to keep an eternal perspective on our attitudes, our relationships, and even our possessions. Think about yesterday... was there somewhere or to someone that you didn't show love? Was there a time that you allowed some bad thoughts or attitudes about others to show themselves? Today choose love. Love your family... your friends... your teammates... your coworkers... choose to love your enemies and thus your God!

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

LOVE ALL

DAY 5

READ MATTHEW 7 & 8

Where is your foundation built? Is it on Christ the rock or on the shifting sands of the world? One test is to see if you find yourself doing what everyone else is doing. If you are, then you are probably not on God's path. Is the music you listen to and the movies you watch the same as the world? Are you gossiping or making fun of others? These are signs that you haven't given everything up to follow Jesus and are living on the world's sand. A further test is to look at the fruit or actions of your life. Are they good? Are they Godly? Wherever you find yourself, these 52 days are meant to rebuild the foundation of your life on Christ. Right now pray and ask the Lord to help rebuild your foundation on Him.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

BUILD ON CHRIST

DAY 6

READ MATTHEW 9 & 10

Two days ago we saw that following God would show itself by the love we show to others. In today's passage he takes it a step further showing that love equals action. Jesus demonstrated His love by having compassion on those that were in need around Him and by healing them of their illnesses and also of their sin. We must also put our money where our mouth is and let our actions show what we say we believe. We can't heal the sick, but we can visit and comfort them in need. We also offer through Christ relief from the burden of sin— their greatest need. Today show your love to a neighbor by either buying them a \$5 gift card to Mcdonald's or Sonic or going and asking them what you can do for them in Jesus' name.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

SHOW YOUR LOVE

DAY 7

READ MATTHEW 11 & 12

Jesus said "no city divided against itself will stand." This is true of your life as well. If you only partially want the things of God, and also try to hold on to the things of this world (popularity, jealousy, gossip etc...) then you will not succeed in walking with Christ. You must either follow Him or not. Are all the things in your life things that might be considered righteous or acceptable to God? Again, look at what your life is producing. Is it edifying and beneficial to others around you or does it tear them down? As you change your life and habits, those around you will notice and either support you or ridicule you. That happened to Jesus and we can expect it to happen to us as well. Today, let someone know of this direction in your life and see how they respond.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

DON'T BE DIVIDED

DAY 8

READ MATTHEW 13 & 14

In these chapter, Jesus performed amazing miracles and told that although perhaps seemingly small now, the things of God will be the things that matter. Think of an item on ebay of great value to you that you normally could not afford. Now imagine that somehow it has been overlooked by others and is selling for a price that if you sold enough of your possessions and got a year's advance on your allowance, you could buy it... would you? I sure would! That is what a relationship with Jesus is like— eternal and abundant life available and affordable if you will give everything for it. What value are you putting on it? Is it worth temporary pleasures and friends? Identify your most prized possessions and determine if your relationship with God is worth more than those.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

WHAT'S IT WORTH?

DAY 9

READ MATTHEW 15 & 16

What we do shows what we believe. When asked who Peter thought Jesus was, he made the declaration "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." How about you... do you believe the same thing? If so, it is followed by your actions? If bad jokes, words or comments come from your mouth, then according to chapter 15 verse 18 you are defiled and do not truly believe in Him. A true follower produces good from his heart and in all situations denies himself, takes up His cross and follows Jesus. Today choose one thing that you normally would do in the morning to give up... maybe breakfast, a morning snack or coke, wearing makeup for the day or even texting or talking on the phone. Deny yourself of this, as a testimony of God being all you need.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

HE IS ENOUGH

DAY 10

READ MATTHEW 17 & 18

As a believer and follower of Christ, you are in line to receive all the riches of the kingdom of God... however we must remember that God has called us to be humble servants that put others above ourselves. We are to look out for our fellow brothers and sisters. If we see them in sin, we are to gently bring them back to God. If you are hurt or wronged by them (and you will be) you are to forgive them unconditionally. Think of someone who wronged you recently whether it is by gossip, something they have said or done to you, or anything else. Right now, ask God to help you forgive them. Keep this on your mind the rest of the day and if you see that person, show God's love to them.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

FORGIVE ALL

DAY 11

READ MATTHEW 19 & 20

Two blind men heard that Jesus was passing by and yelled for Him to come and heal them. The crowd around tried to get them to be quiet but they persisted and received through faith the healing they needed. Have you ever been like that crowd of people and have kept those who truly needed Christ from coming to Him? Perhaps you've seen people different from you at church and not truly considered the need they may have for Christ. Maybe it's a younger student that you simply pass over and don't spend some time with them. Look around you today and take note of those "others" that you may not normally see. Decide now that you will take the time to help them or meet their need.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

TAKE A LOOK

DAY 12

READ MATTHEW 21 & 22

In these chapters Jesus addresses many people who mistakenly thought they were following God. He told parables illustrating their evil and their misleading attitudes and actions and even said directly: "I tell you the truth, the tax collector's and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you." Could it be that as we look at *our* attitudes and actions that *we* are missing what it is to follow after God? One parable tells of people that were invited to a wedding feast, but at the time they were called upon they didn't show up. The host then instructed his servants to fill the place up with anyone they could find. *You* have been invited to be a part of an incredible journey with Christ- don't make Him find a replacement!

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

DON'T BACK OUT

DAY 13

READ MATTHEW 23 & 24

Jesus had a lot of warnings for people who said they were following Him but really weren't. He said that what really matters is the condition of a man's heart. No amount of great deeds can make up for an evil heart. He said we must clean ourselves on the inside, then the outer things will follow. We can come to church a thousand times or give to the needy every week, but if we truly don't want to follow after God, then we're wasting our time. Where is your heart? Do you have a daily desire to follow in His steps? Ask God to forgive you of your sins and to help you keep your mind, attitudes and actions clean.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

CLEAN ME UP

DAY 14

READ MATTHEW 25 & 26

Are you prepared for the excitement and challenges that God has for you? Jesus told two stories depicting people who were entrusted with responsibility. Some of them were active and ready when the proper time came, but others were not. Do you realize that there are many opportunities that God has for you each week? The question isn't if they will come, but if you will be ready and looking for them! Don't be caught off guard and surely don't blow it like Peter did! It may be a surprise chance to share your faith or a great opportunity to help someone out, but whatever be willing and prepared for action! By reading the Word and this challenge today, you are preparing yourself for where God might use you, now just keep your eyes open for the proper time!

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

BE PREPARED

DAY 15

READ MATTHEW 27 & 28

Our entire faith hinges on these two chapters—the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. What were your emotions as you read this? Do you believe it? Can you believe it—this is awesome! God has provided victory over your failures!! Everything we have talked about before: life change, pure motives, good attitudes and eternal life are possible because of these astounding events!! God has saved you and now empowered you to share this incredible set of events! Today as you go, remember this incredible accomplishment and share it! Honor Christ's last request to you, His disciple... GO and TELL!!

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

CHRIST IS ALIVE

DAY 16

READ MARK 1

Right before Jesus began His public teaching, Satan tried to tempt Him into ruining God's plan. Jesus was tired and weary from fasting in the desert and Satan thought in this vulnerable state he good get Jesus to slip. If Satan thought Jesus was vulnerable, he must think we're an easy target! You have been faithfully spending time with God these past few weeks, but Satan wants to put a stop to it right now! He wants to ruin you either through temptation or maybe even a hard circumstance! Be very careful and aware that Satan wants you to fail! Pray right now that you will not give in to temptation or fall victim to the devil's schemes!

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

RESIST SATAN

DAY 17

READ MARK 2

Jesus told Levi to follow Him and Levi responded by immediately leaving his place of work and following Christ. The next thing we see is Levi giving all his friends the opportunity to know the forgiveness of Jesus. How quickly do you respond to what God asks of you? Are other things in life too important and delay your response? Jesus ate with "tax collectors and sinners" and was ridiculed for it. At school or work you have the opportunity to be around similar people— people who desperately need the life change and forgiveness that Jesus provides. Ask God to open your eyes to those in need of the forgiveness and in need of the comfort. Also ask Him to empower you to share it.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

DON'T HESITATE

DAY 18

READ MARK 3 & 4

God has chosen and appointed you to show his light wherever you go. He knows the classes you have and even the people that are in you path and consequently has put you in that exact spot to be his light. Too often we cover it up. Sometimes it's our sin or selfishness that keeps others from seeing it. Sometimes it's our fear of what others might think. That makes us intentionally hide the good news. Is there an obstacle in your life that keeps others from knowing and seeing God's great light through you? Examine your life right now and pray that any obstacle would be removed.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

BE LIGHT

DAY 19

READ MARK 5 & 6

Even amidst being tired and weary, when Jesus saw people in need he had compassion on them and met those needs. How do you respond after a long day when you're tired and ready to be alone? Have there been people during those times who came into your path that needed some help, or perhaps just a little bit of attention and encouragement? Sure, it's easy to try to put it off until later, but we need to see them as Jesus does and in His strength minister to them as best we can. Today, really look at people and see their need. Ask the Lord to strengthen you and provide the insight and wisdom to minister in His name.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

SEE THE PEOPLE

DAY 20

READ MARK 7 & 8

Jesus questioned his disciples by saying: "Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear?" They had been with Jesus for quite sometime and were still missing the point about much of what He did and said. When Jesus was talking about spiritual things, their minds were on the physical. Do you look for spiritual significance in every day things? Too often we do not do this and miss out on some amazing spiritual truths. Have there been any circumstances of your life that were challenging— if even for a day? Could there be spiritual things to learn and understand from that? Today begin to see every part of your journey that God allows as an opportunity for better spiritual understanding.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

LEARN FROM ALL

DAY 21

READ MARK 9 & 10

Jesus said: "whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all." It seems that we are always striving to get ahead of others in whatever we do, whether it's in line, in a competition, or even the first to know what's going on. Yet, one of the most powerful ways we can demonstrate God's love is to choose to be a servant. It's not flashy and it will probably go unnoticed, but being a servant is to follow in Christ's footsteps. Today intentionally be a servant and choose a family member to serve. On the back of this sheet write what you did to be a servant.

ACCOUNTABILITY PHRASE:

BE A SERVANT