



#### Check In

Connect with God honestly about where you are at



#### Reflect

"Review until" something pops to talk to God about



#### Share

Talk with God & others about what is now on your heart to do

## Matthew

### Session 11 - Responding to Jesus' Heavenly Life

#### Check-In

God is glad to connect with you. He wants to hear about how you are doing. Take a moment to notice your primary emotion of the day to help yourself be fully present. Consider whether you are primarily sad, angry, scared, happy, tender, etc. Share with God that emotion. Write out: What are you thankful about? Ask him, "How does he feel about you?"

#### Reflect

Spend some time with the biblical texts and the resources below. Do so until something pops out to you; feel free to stop when the Lord prompts you this way. Talk with God about what encourages, challenges, or confuses you.

#### Read Matthew 7:13-29

*Jesus concludes his vision for the heavenly life with four sobering pictures responding to his revelation of reality. The choice is similar to Moses' choice for the Hebrews between life/blessing and death/curse. Ultimately, these pictures ask the hearer, "What do you intend to do with what you have heard?" First, we are presented with two ways to live representing the easy flow of the world and Pharisees and the harder path of obedience and fewer travelers (13-14). Second, we are told there will be imposters within the followers of Jesus who with some common sense discernment we can identify as false guides by their character (15-20). Third, we are warned that fellow followers may not be what they seem based on their behavior alone (21-23). Finally, we are warned that our foundation is our relationship with Jesus, tested by our response to his words. Ultimately, Jesus reminds his hearers that the difficulty of the path, our motivations, our fruits are no substitute for a personal relationship with him. Matthew emphasizes this by recording the crowds' response to Jesus as the authoritative source of this revelation.*

Pay attention to these recurring themes in *The Gospel of Matthew*:

**Immanuel, God With Us** - What is it like to be with Jesus?

**Teaching, as revelation** - What does Jesus' teaching reveal about reality? God? People? The world? The enemy?

**The Church** - What do you learn about the true Israel and the community of people shaped by life with Jesus?

Read this excerpt from [\*The Gospel of Matthew: Torah for the Church\*](#) by Farley

**NOTE:** Is there something you, or your family, need in light of this part of the Sermon? To be heard, prayer, time to practice, or shepherding (truth-telling, encouragement, or support)?

#### Share

Be quiet for 3 minutes. What do you sense God is saying to you? How will you pursue being faithful with that this week? The community is blessed when we share out of our life experiences, gifts, time with God, and reflect on scripture. We believe everyone contributes to teaching. What insight, question, or experience do you want to share with us?

Steps for Church Families of Prayerful Love:

- What are you thankful for? What challenges are happening in your life, family, and community?
- What did you like/not like about the Scripture?
- What did you learn about God and people from the Scripture?
- What do you think God is inviting you to live with him this week?
- Who do you know who needs to hear this?
- Ask God: How can I bless (body, labor, emotions, social, spiritual) those people who need this?