



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 19 - Doubt in Suffering or Childish Rejection

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 11:2-19

Matthew begins the third thematic section of his Gospel by revisiting John the Baptist. The theme that will build throughout this collection of stories and Jesus' third discourse (chapters 11-13) will be about the various responses to the Kingdom. Matthew likely sees his Hebrew Christian audience in a similar place as John. They have been counter-culture and a prophetic voice to Israel. But now find themselves persecuted like John in prison under threat of death. John, like the Hebrews, anticipated the Messiah being a political ruler who would overthrow Herod and Rome. We can imagine that John hoped this would happen soon to facilitate his release. Whatever his motivations, even the Spirit on his life and the experience of Jesus' baptism could not overcome the creeping doubt as he suffered in prison. Matthew likely wants his audience, and us, to be reminded what kind of Kingdom Jesus is bringing and if it is faithful to God's promises. He also wants us to hear Jesus' care and respect for John while confronting the potential childish rejection of God and his ways that can grow when we do not get our way.

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

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. Everyone contributes to teaching. What insight, question, or experience do you want to share?

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?