



**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 22 - Demonizing Others or a Surrendered Heart

#### 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 12:22-37

*Matthew is shepherding his audience through responses to the Kingdom like doubt, pride, and religiosity. Jesus encounters resistance from religiosity first through how people manage their sin. Now he addresses how religiosity demonizes others while ignoring the condition of our own hearts. The Pharisees are threatened by Jesus' relational approach to whoever will receive his Kingdom willingly. They demonize the truth of Jesus' Kingdom to protect themselves from facing the truth. Jesus' response addresses the fruit of what his Kingdom produces and how we will eventually reveal the truth of our hearts with the words we speak. No amount of external management or demonizing others can hide the truth of our spiritual condition. We need to humbly and willing surrender to Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins and to be changed at a heart level.*

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?