





Welcome to your Christ Central growth group! I hope this group is a genuine spiritual community – a group where you can pray together, share how life is really going in this broken world and give support, and at the heart of it – study the word and encourage each other in the good news of Jesus. And in terms of bible study, we're returning (again!) to Matthew's gospel that we started way back in January 2020. This particular series will take us up to Easter and will cover chapters 19-22.

If we go to the very end of the gospel we hear these words from the resurrected Jesus:

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

By his resurrection to life, Jesus is indeed Lord of all and has all authority – everyone should be his followers. But in this section of Matthew we're exploring, we'll see that He's not there yet. In fact this is the part where Jesus is getting closer towards Jerusalem and will enter that most famous and prophesied city. And we'll see that acclaim for Jesus is soon replaced with opposition and hatred. In fact, his journey is a journey to the cross.

In our study of Matthew's gospel, we'll be using the 'Swedish Method' – some group members will be familiar with this approach, for others it will be brand new. Here's some basic tips which your leader will go through with you:

- Bring a paper bible and pen. And though the preacher uses the latest NIV on Sundays, there's nothing wrong with different versions in a group setting.
- Leave study bibles or extra resources at home to get the most out of group discovery and learning. Even resist the urge to Google answers!
 Listen well to each other and learn.
- The 'Digging Deeper' and 'Bringing It Home' question are only there for extra help if your group needs it. You don't need to feel compelled to go through that section.
- Start and finish with prayer, and it's well worth praying for each other in the light of God's word that you've just studied. What do you learn about God from the word that you can then take to praise Him in prayer?

May we all grow as disciples of Jesus as we study His word.

Garnet



Like Children

MATTHEW 19:13-30

Introduction Question

What makes kids so annoying? (this is a kind-of joke question, but there's a kind-of serious side to it as well, so have a go at answering it if you don't mind!) What makes kids so endearing?

Q Exploring Together

In our Growth Groups, we've been using what's known as the 'Swedish Method'. It's a way of giving us time to process what's there in the passage and to get discussion going on what we've observed. Follow the directions below and note down some of your own observations and thoughts. Then we'll discuss what you've found!

Light Bulb. Write down any interesting observations you get from the passage. This includes things that stand out, repeated ideas/words or something you found unusual.

Question Mark. Any questions from the text or an issue or point that doesn't make sense from the passage. Questions are great! They encourage us to think a bit harder about the passage and its implications. They also give us a chance to help each other understand Scripture better.

Arrow. Note down any reflections on things you found challenging or applicable to you. The bible addresses our heads, hearts and hands, or if you like, our thoughts, attitudes and actions so reflect on whether the passage addresses any of these.

Read Matthew 19:13-30 and take some time to fill in the sections below.

1	
ુ	
-	After your group time of discussing the passage using the Swedish Method, if
	you have any time left, choose any of the questions from the 'Digging Deeper' or
١	'Bringing it Home' sections.

Digging deeper

Matthew 18:1-5). What makes children such teaching on the kingdom of heaven?	· ·
2. When Jesus provides the young man withat he doesn't include any from the first has known as the 'decalogue' (See Exodus 20:1 the case? Jesus also skips a particular com 10 commandments "You shall not covet your your neighbour's wife, or his male or female statements belongs to your neighbour." Why do you thin	alf of the 10 commandments, also -17). Why do you think that might be mandment from the second half of the reighbour's house. You shall not covet servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that
3. What is the link between the moment wayoung man who comes to Jesus?	vith the children and Jesus, and this

4. We notice that the disciples are utterly astonished at Jesus' teaching about the rich (v25). Their reaction could be in part because of their view that riches are a sign of God's blessing, and so Jesus is flipping their thinking. What makes wealth so dangerous that it would be in need of getting rid of?
5. In response to disciples' incredulous question "Who then can be saved?", Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (v26). This whole section of Matthew's gospel is in the period of Jesus getting closer and closer to Jerusalem where certain events shall take place (see Matthew 20:17-19). What does Jesus do for us that makes the impossible, possible?
◯ Bringing it Home
6. No where in the gospels does Jesus categorically condemn wealth and he never commanded every rich person he encountered to sell all of her or his possessions. But we should note that Jesus is never positive about wealth and consistently speaks about its dangers (Matthew 6:19-21; Luke 12:15-21). Do think you're alert enough to its dangers? What needs to be our/your practical attitude towards wealth and possessions?
7. If someone came up to do, knowing that you go to church and asked 'What good thing must I do to get eternal life?" what would you say?



Remember to use your bookmark and pray for those 3 people who don't know that Jesus is King.



Hope Explored

Starting Tuesday Night 6 February | 630-8pm (Dinner Included) | Petrie

Please pray for Hope Explored coming up. Pray that God would bring people to HE, and for boldness to invite others ourselves. Pray also for the HE Team.



For more info christcentral.org.au.go/hope



+ BIBLE TA Sunday 4 F	ALK NOTES ebruary	MATTHEW 19:13-30



Radical Generosity

MATTHEW 20:1-16

Introduction Question

When was a time you received an unexpected act of kindness or generosity
from someone (e.g. encouraging words, a gift, a hospitable gesture, financial or
practical help etc.)? What impression did it leave on you?

Q Exploring Together

In our Growth Groups, we've been using what's known as the 'Swedish Method'. It's a way of giving us time to process what's there in the passage and to get discussion going on what we've observed. Follow the directions below and note down some of your own observations and thoughts. Then we'll discuss what you've found!

Light Bulb. Write down any interesting observations you get from the passage. This includes things that stand out, repeated ideas/words or something you found unusual.

Question Mark. Any questions from the text or an issue or point that doesn't make sense from the passage. Questions are great! They encourage us to think a bit harder about the passage and its implications. They also give us a chance to help each other understand Scripture better.

Arrow. Note down any reflections on things you found challenging or applicable to you. The bible addresses our heads, hearts and hands, or if you like, our thoughts, attitudes and actions so reflect on whether the passage addresses any of these.

Read Matthew 20:1-16 and take some time to fill in the sections below.

(?)			
(→) a			

1	
4	After your group time of discussing the passage using the Cwedish Method if
١	After your group time of discussing the passage using the Swedish Method, if
١	you have any time left, choose any of the questions from the 'Digging Deeper' or
١	'Bringing it Home' sections.

Digging deeper

What does the complaint of the first workers reveal about their attitude towards the landowner (see v11-12, 15)? Consider both their heart-disposition towards the landowner and the beliefs they held about him.	
2. What does the landowner's response in v13-15 reveal about his heart and character? How does this contrast to the first workers' assumptions about the landowner? Consider the landowner's words, manner and actions towards both the first workers and the later workers.	າ
$oldsymbol{3}.$ The landowner sought after the idle workers, hired them, and paid them fair and generously. How should this type of relationship shape the workers' trust in	
submission to and acceptance of the landowner and his decisions?	

4. This passage is a continuation of Jesus' previous teaching about the kingdom of heaven in Matthew 19:16-30. This is demonstrated by the "For" at the start of this parable (20:1).
The phrase "the first will be the last and the last will be first" appears in both passages (19:30, 20:16).
In what ways does Jesus both reinforce and add-to/expand his previous teaching about God's kingdom through this parable?
5. Are there people in your life with whom your thoughts are not directed by grace, but instead directed by a sense of fairness and complaint? What will it mean for you to have your heart changed so that you are truly grace-filled towards them?
6. How might you this week live in submission to our generous God and dwell more on His grace toward undeserving sinners? (E.g. expressing thankfulness to God, meditating on Scripture, singing songs of praise, repenting of grumbling attitudes, praying for others to be blessed by Him, pointing others towards His generosity in both word and deed etc.)



Remember to use your bookmark and pray for those 3 people who don't know that Jesus is King.



Young Adults Weekend Away

February 23-25 | Lake Moogerah

For more information contact Luke Zylstra.



Register online



+	BIBLE TALK NOTES Sunday 11 February	MATTHEW 20:1-16
		
		
<u></u>		
		



MATTHEW 20:17-34

Introduction Question

Imagine you had a time machine and you could pick some famous or great leaders from history to visit. Who would they be and why would you like to meet them?

Q Exploring Together

In our Growth Groups, we've been using what's known as the 'Swedish Method'. It's a way of giving us time to process what's there in the passage and to get discussion going on what we've observed. Follow the directions below and note down some of your own observations and thoughts. Then we'll discuss what you've found!

Light Bulb. Write down any interesting observations you get from the passage. This includes things that stand out, repeated ideas/words or something you found unusual.

Question Mark. Any questions from the text or an issue or point that doesn't make sense from the passage. Questions are great! They encourage us to think a bit harder about the passage and its implications. They also give us a chance to help each other understand Scripture better.

Arrow. Note down any reflections on things you found challenging or applicable to you. The bible addresses our heads, hearts and hands, or if you like, our thoughts, attitudes and actions so reflect on whether the passage addresses any of these.

ead Matthew 20:17-34 and take some time to fill in the sections below.	
	······
2)	
→)	

	`
4	After your group time of discussi

After your group time of discussing the passage using the Swedish Method, if you have any time left, choose any of the questions from the 'Digging Deeper' or 'Bringing it Home' sections.

Digging deeper

1. Did you notice that on their way to Jerusalem, Jesus takes his disciples away from the following crowds to privately tell them what is about to happen (v18-19) Jesus is very deliberate in setting out the sequence of awful steps that will take place. What are they?
2. Is James and John's mum an embarrassing example of 'helicopter parenting'?! (v21) But in terms of her request of Jesus – how is it a display of faith, but also of gross misunderstanding?
The term 'the cup' has a particular meaning in the Old Testament – referring to suffering and even the wrath of God (See Isaiah 51:17; Jeremiah 25:15-16) that He makes Israel or the nations drink down to its dregs for their sin. Jesus will again take up the term in Matthew 26:39. So how should we understand Jesus' question to the two disciples (v22), their response (v22) and Jesus' words in reply (v23)?

It's possible that Zebedee's sons don't fully understand what they confidently claim! Like the other disciples there will be a time when they run away in fear (Matthew 26:56), but Jesus does affirm that they indeed will suffer for Jesus (drink the cup) – James will be executed (Acts 12:12), and John will be exiled to the island of Patmos (Revelation 1:9).

4. If you track through the passages over the last couple of weeks, there has been a common message from Jesus. See – Matthew 19:20; 20:16, and now 20:26. Why is it a message that's so hard to get?!
$oldsymbol{5}$. What does 'ransom' mean? (v28)
Bringing it Home 6. Is Zebedee's sons or their mum that different from the rest of the disciples (or us!)? They are just obvious and bold in making their move! If you could be honest, what is the particular version of greatness that your heart craves?
7. When our hearts grasp the gospel truth that Jesus came to 'give his life as a ransom for many', how does this bring us to a place of real humility?
8. What are the areas of church life where you struggle to be a sacrificial/humble servant and slave of others? What will it mean for you to grow to be more like Jesus?



Remember to use your bookmark and pray for those 3 people who don't know that Jesus is King.



Kids Weekender

March 8-10 | Grades 4-6 | Camp Warrawee

This year at Kids Weekenders, hold onto your magnifying glasses, the moment you've been waiting for has finally arrived! We're going to have an adventure like no other as work together with our Bible Investigators to uncover evidence, follow the clues, and solve the mystery of the man who defeated death and brought us back to God!





+ BIBLE TALK NOTES Sunday 18 February	MATTHEW 20:17-34



The Promised King

MATTHEW 21:1-27

Introduction Question

Have you ever been part of an excited crowd who came together to watch some dignitaries/celebrity/team/parade go by? What was it like?

Q Exploring Together

In our Growth Groups, we've been using what's known as the 'Swedish Method'. It's a way of giving us time to process what's there in the passage and to get discussion going on what we've observed. Follow the directions below and note down some of your own observations and thoughts. Then we'll discuss what you've found!

Light Bulb. Write down any interesting observations you get from the passage. This includes things that stand out, repeated ideas/words or something you found unusual.

Question Mark. Any questions from the text or an issue or point that doesn't make sense from the passage. Questions are great! They encourage us to think a bit harder about the passage and its implications. They also give us a chance to help each other understand Scripture better.

Arrow. Note down any reflections on things you found challenging or applicable to you. The bible addresses our heads, hearts and hands, or if you like, our thoughts, attitudes and actions so reflect on whether the passage addresses any of these.

(Q)			
<u></u>			
\bigcirc			
(\rightarrow)			

Read Matthew 21:1-27 and take some time to fill in the sections below.

(!)

After your group time of discussing the passage using the Swedish Method, if you have any time left, choose any of the questions from the 'Digging Deeper' or 'Bringing it Home' sections.



Scripture being fulfilled is of great important to both Jesus and the writer (Matthew) in this passage (see v4-7, 9, 13, 16).

In 2 Corinthians 1:20 Paul says, "For in all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory."

Jesus' heart is humble (v4), yet he intentionally and boldly promotes himself in v1-11 to be the One, the Messiah - the fulfilment of past prophesy (and rightly so).

- 1. Read the following Old Testament references:
 - Zechariah 9:8-17
 - Psalm 118:22-29
 - Zechariah 8:1-8
 - Isaiah 53

what does Scripture tell us about who this king is, why he's come, and what he's come to do?

Douglas O'Donnell, "Preaching the Word":

"It's laughable to think about a Roman emperor straddled over such a slow, dirty, undignified, and unpretentious beast...When a king comes to town, the expectation is that he will ride proudly upon a battle steed at the head of a parade of decorated troops...The prophet intentionally wrote of this king being humble."

"...in contrast with the arrogance and violence usually associated with earthly kings, this king, we are told, will be poor and afflicted; he will be a sovereign Lord and yet a suffering servant."

2. What parallels do you notice between the Old Testament references and our passage; how can you see God's ancient plan coming to fruition as Jesus enters Jerusalem?
3. Jesus encounters many different people in this passage. He engages with them differently and they each have varying reactions to Him.
a) How does Jesus respond to the following people? What does this show us about what He values?
Disciples (v1-7, 21-22):
Buyers & Sellers (v12-13, 18-19):
J
Blind and Lame (v14):
Jewish Leaders (v16-17, 18-19, 23-27):
50 mon 2000010 (V10 1/1 10 15) 2/ //

b) How do people respond to Jesus' Kingship? Are they fitting responses to who Jesus truly is?			
Disciples (v6-7, 20):			
Crowds (v8-11):			
Blind and Lame (v14):			
Jewish Leaders (v15-16, 23-27):			
Bringing it Home 4. How has Jesus' Kingship (displayed in this passage) strengthened and/or challenged your thoughts and attitudes towards Him?			
${f 5.}$ How are you going with responding to Jesus in reverence, trust, submission, and faith?			
How might knowing that God's plan to redeem His people was through a servant King shape how we think/feel about where we're currently at?			



Remember to use your bookmark and pray for those 3 people who don't know that Jesus is King.



Women in the Word

Saturday 23 March

Join with other women of Christ Central in a morning of fellowship, food, and feasting on God's word. Our guest speaker this year will be Emma Fooks from Anne Street Presbyterian who will be speaking on relationships and forgiveness. Registrations will open soon.

+ BIBLE TALK NOTES Sunday 25 February	MATTHEW 21:1-27



Missing out on the Kingdom

MATTHEW 21:28-46

Introduction Question

Have you ever been overlooked for a job or other opportunity that you felt you deserved, only to see someone else given the role (perhaps someone you thought you were in fact more qualified than)? How did you feel in the moment?

Q Exploring Together

In our Growth Groups, we've been using what's known as the 'Swedish Method'. It's a way of giving us time to process what's there in the passage and to get discussion going on what we've observed. Follow the directions below and note down some of your own observations and thoughts. Then we'll discuss what you've found!

Light Bulb. Write down any interesting observations you get from the passage. This includes things that stand out, repeated ideas/words or something you found unusual.

Question Mark. Any questions from the text or an issue or point that doesn't make sense from the passage. Questions are great! They encourage us to think a bit harder about the passage and its implications. They also give us a chance to help each other understand Scripture better.

Arrow. Note down any reflections on things you found challenging or applicable to you. The bible addresses our heads, hearts and hands, or if you like, our thoughts, attitudes and actions so reflect on whether the passage addresses any of these.

(<u>)</u>	 	 	
?			
_	 	 	
\rightarrow			

Read Matthew 21:28-46 and take some time to fill in the sections below.

1	
Y	After your group time of discussing the passage using the Swedish Method, if
	you have any time left, choose any of the questions from the 'Digging Deeper' or

Digging (deeper
-----------	--------

'Bringing it Home' sections.

■ With Jesus' telling of the parable of the Two Sons (vv28-32), how is the illustration of these two figures meant to be applied?
2. What does the Parable of the Two Sons (vv28-32) teach us about the importance of our actions compared to our words?
3. Do you think that the religious leaders Jesus was addressing were completely and permanently disqualified from entering the Kingdom of God? Why, or why not?
4. In verse 42, Jesus applies Psalm 118:22-23 to Himself. Probably behind the Parable of the Tenants, are also the words of Isaiah 5:1-7. What is the point that Jesus is making with this parable?

5. What makes the response of the chief priests and Pharisees (v45-46), so ironic in their tragic fulfillment of scripture and this parable?
💙 Bringing it Home
6. The rejection of Jesus by the chief priests and Pharisees was a tragedy. Rejection of Jesus is always a tragedy. But how does Jesus' words in v42-44 add to our picture of who Jesus is and what's at stake in the rejection of Him?
7. There are real and terrible warnings in both these parables, but how do these parables also offer a word of hope? How might we apply this hope?
Prayer
Remember to use your bookmark and pray for those 3 people who don't know that Jesus is King.



Working Bee Saturday 9 March at Petrie

It's not too late to sign up for our Working Bee on Saturday 9 March at our Petrie Campus. We need all hands on deck to maintain and improve the property so that we can keep it as great resource for gospel ministry. Go online or sign up on Sunday.



Women in the Word

Saturday 23 March

Join with other women of Christ Central in a morning of fellowship, food, and feasting on God's word. Our guest speaker this year will be Emma Fooks from Anne Street Presbyterian who will be speaking on relationships and forgiveness. Registrations will open soon.

BIBLE TALK NOTES Sunday 3 March	MATTHEW 21:28-46



Refusing God's Invitation

MATTHEW 22:1-22

Introduction Question

In your experience of being invited to weddings and wedding receptions, what have you enjoyed? Perhaps you could share a particularly memorable positive experience.

Q Exploring Together

In our Growth Groups, we've been using what's known as the 'Swedish Method'. It's a way of giving us time to process what's there in the passage and to get discussion going on what we've observed. Follow the directions below and note down some of your own observations and thoughts. Then we'll discuss what you've found!

Light Bulb. Write down any interesting observations you get from the passage. This includes things that stand out, repeated ideas/words or something you found unusual.

Question Mark. Any questions from the text or an issue or point that doesn't make sense from the passage. Questions are great! They encourage us to think a bit harder about the passage and its implications. They also give us a chance to help each other understand Scripture better.

Arrow. Note down any reflections on things you found challenging or applicable to you. The bible addresses our heads, hearts and hands, or if you like, our thoughts, attitudes and actions so reflect on whether the passage addresses any of these.

(<u>)</u>	 	 	
?			
\rightarrow			

Read Matthew 22:1-22 and take some time to fill in the sections below.

(!)

After your group time of discussing the passage using the Swedish Method, if you have any time left, choose any of the questions from the 'Digging Deeper' or 'Bringing it Home' sections.

Digging deeper

1. This is the third in a series of parables that Jesus gives: 1) Matthew 21:28-32 2) Matthew 21:33-46, and then 3) Matthew 22:1-14. What do you see as similar in tone and content when you think about all three parables? It's worth noting a specific repeating element in 21v37 and 22v2. What does this say about the central message of these parables?
2. We can note in this parable that there are ancient cultural wedding day practices that Jesus is drawing on eg. sending out messengers to collect those who've been invited, but what are the surprising and shocking elements of this story that tell us that Jesus is explaining spiritual truth on a completely different level?
3. We should ask questions about the identity of the various people in the parable – those who've refused to attend the wedding, those who were found on the surrounding roads, and the man who was found to be not dressed and ready. Parables can be challenging to interpret but what might we say is similar about those who refused to come & the one who was there but still not ready?

4. In v15-16 we're told about two types of Jewish people - the Pharisees and the Herodians who in fact were often enemies. The Pharisees, the religious rulers who sought strict application of the law, wanted to resist Roman rule and cultural integration, while the Herodian Jews were more compliant and sought integration. What does this moment say about their view towards Jesus?
5. In v21, the word for 'give' in more precise terms means 'give back'. How is this helpful in our understanding for what Jesus is calling these Jewish people to do?
6. In our own setting we are not living with an empire, under the totalitarian rule of a Caesar. Instead we live in a democracy where we can vote out a leader/party every 3-4 years. How does this change or not change the way we apply Jesus' teaching?
7. All three parables of Matthew 21 & 22 sound a strong warning, but there's so often notes of hope and grace. What should be our response to this third parable individually but also as a church?
8. What is particularly challenging for you, as you think about practically living out the implications of Jesus words about Caesar and God?

$oldsymbol{9}.$ Where are you currently holding back from God?		
Prayer		
Remember to use your bookmark and pray for those 3 people who don't know that Jesus is King.		



Easter Weekend

At gam on Good Friday and Easter Sunday we come together to celebrate the meaning of Easter. We would love to have your friends and family with us - that they would know that through Jesus' death and resurrection, Death is Defeated!



Jesus & the Law

MATTHEW 22:34-46

Introduction Question

Throughout this term we've given encouragement to pray for our friends and contacts who don't yet know Jesus. If you had the opportunity to ask it, how do you think they would answer the question - 'How does God want us to live?

Q Exploring Together

In our Growth Groups, we've been using what's known as the 'Swedish Method'. It's a way of giving us time to process what's there in the passage and to get discussion going on what we've observed. Follow the directions below and note down some of your own observations and thoughts. Then we'll discuss what you've found!

Light Bulb. Write down any interesting observations you get from the passage. This includes things that stand out, repeated ideas/words or something you found unusual.

Question Mark. Any questions from the text or an issue or point that doesn't make sense from the passage. Questions are great! They encourage us to think a bit harder about the passage and its implications. They also give us a chance to help each other understand Scripture better.

Arrow. Note down any reflections on things you found challenging or applicable to you. The bible addresses our heads, hearts and hands, or if you like, our thoughts, attitudes and actions so reflect on whether the passage addresses any of these.

<u></u>	 	 	
\bigcirc			
<u></u>	 	 	
<u></u>		 	
	 	 	
(\rightarrow)			
<u></u>			

Read Matthew 22:34-46 and take some time to fill in the sections below.



After your group time of discussing the passage using the Swedish Method, if you have any time left, choose any of the questions from the 'Digging Deeper' or 'Bringing it Home' sections.



1 Peter 3:21-22

Digging deeper

1. In Jesus' response to the question from the expert in the law (a lawyer!), Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18. Those Deuteronomy words came to be known as the *Shema* meaning 'to hear/listen'. For Jewish people these words were part of daily prayer – expressing faith, that because God is uniquely singular and whole in nature, His followers should be whole in their love for him.

for him.	whote in hazare, the follows	on and the whole with the tove
What might divided โด	ove/devotion to the Lord ou	ır God look like?
New Testament! It go this passage for unde And in fact, when you referenced at least fo	es to show how important the rstanding the identity of Jest take into account Psalm 110 urteen times in the New Test	Testament verse in all of the ne New Testament writers saw sus as the Messiah (the Christ). DV4, this Psalm is directly stament, alluded to many other of the bible giving commentary
quotes or alludes to F	then read the following pas Psalm 110v1. As you read the nority and victory over his er	m, discuss how Jesus has taker
Acts 2:32-36	Ephesians 1:20-23	Hebrews 1:3

Matthew 26:62-68

3. Throughout this term, we've been in the part of Matthew's gospel where Jesus has entered Jerusalem, and from then on, the religious leaders have been on the attack. They've been asking questions of Jesus to challenge and trap him (we can even see this back at 21:23) but Jesus has given his answers and even asked questions of them. What do you think is the reason, that it gets to the point that 'no one dared to question Jesus anymore' v46?
C Bringing it Home
4. In his article 'Are you a Fragmented Person?' Scott Redd talks about the Shema and makes the point - "The Shema paints the picture of a life shaped by the wholeness of God's character and directed toward a unified purpose. The workings of our heart, the activity of our bodies, and the use of our property are to be united by our love for our Lord. Such a life resists the fragmenting tendencies of our secular age in which busy schedules, varied demands and the endless stimuli of information threaten to shatter us into irreconcilable parts."
Discuss how you face the pressure to not live in unified love for our Lord. What is one area of your life right now you should pray about and bring to the Lord?
Prayer
Remember to use your bookmark and pray for those 3 people who don't know that Jesus is King.



Christ Central Bible Reading Plan

January - March 2024

We read the bible together each Sunday. We also read the bible in our mid-week growth groups. But at Christ Central we also encourage the personal discipline of reading consistently and systematically through the bible for ourselves. As we take up a habit of bible reading, we let God's truth and his gospel penetrate our hearts and minds, and that's something we all need as followers of Jesus – "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." Romans 10:2.

Here's some info and tips for this bible reading plan:

- **1.** The weekly plan involved 5 days out of 7, giving you 2 days as a 'catch up buffer'.
- 2. We're supplying an Old Testament reading as well as a New Testament reading, and if you want to go further there's an option of an Additional Reading which is either a Psalm or part of Proverbs.
- **3.** Many of us struggle to perfectly keep to a plan we forget, we get busy, we just get slack. So when we stop reading the bible for a period of time, the important thing is to start again!
- **4.** We're better at keeping to a plan when we stick to a consistent time eg. before breakfast, over breakfast, on the train, before bed.
- 5. Start and finish your bible reading with prayer.

2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Mark

This term we will be reading the second book of Kings, and first and second Chronicles. 2 Kings continues the history of the nation of Israel, which in the previous book of 1 Kings had divided into two nations – Israel and Judah – a degradation caused by human rulers that disobeyed God and His commands. When the kings served the Lord, the nation prospered. When they opposed him, God sent prophets to warn them His judgement was at hand. When they refused to obey the prophets, God punished their nations. There were many wars – including a war between Israel and Judah – and eventually, God allowed Assyria to destroy Israel. After a period of grace due to obedient kings, when Judah again turned from the Lord He allowed the nation to follow Israel in destruction by the hand of Babylon.

1 Chronicles contains the same story as the Books of Samuel and Kings, written after the destruction and exile of the Israelites and Judahites for those returning to Israel. The first nine chapters are comprised of lists and genealogies, which are scattered across the rest of the book, and then the story of King David – with special focus on his careful instruction to the priests on construction of the temple and acceptable worship, concluding with David's son Solomon ascending to the throne. 2 Chronicles continues with Solomons' reign and the construction of the temple his father planned in Jerusalem - then records the separation, decline and destruction of Israel and Judah and the temple. Little of the evil kings or the failures of the good kings is mentioned, with emphasis placed on the spiritual reformers who seek for the people to return to the Lord.

From the New Testament, we will be reading Gospel of Mark, the second account of Jesus' ministry on earth. The stark comparison between the earthly, wicked kings of Israel and Judah, and our holy, faultless king Jesus, reminds us how far from His grace we fall, how desperately we need Him, and how merciful He is to turn our hearts to Him and His eternal and perfect rule.

Leading up to Easter, the New Testament readings cover the chapters on the crucifixion of Jesus in the three other Gospels, Matthew, Luke and John. We encourage you to take this time to truly dwell on the great sacrifice our God made - simultaneously descending to earth in human form and sending His only son, dying a gruesome death we deserve as punishment for breaking His holy law, and raising to life again, seated at the right hand of the Father – where He is to this day, waiting for the time to come for us to enter His kingdom cloaked in His righteousness.







JANUARY 1-8 2 Kings 1 - 2; Mark 1: 1 - 11 2 Kings 3; Mark 1: 12 - 20 2 Kings 4; Mark 1: 21 - 34 2 Kings 5; Mark 1: 35 - 45 2 Kings 6 - 7: 1; Mark 2: 1 - 17	Extra Reading O Ecclesiastes 1 O Ecclesiastes 2 O Ecclesiastes 3 O Ecclesiastes 4 O Ecclesiastes 5
JANUARY 8-14 2 Kings 7:2 - 20; Mark 2: 18 - 28 2 Kings 8; Mark 3: 1 - 12 2 Kings 9; Mark 3: 13 - 21 2 Kings 10; Mark 3: 22 - 35 2 Kings 11 - 12; Mark 4: 1 - 20	Extra Reading O Ecclesiastes 6 O Ecclesiastes 7: 1 - 13 O Ecclesiastes 7: 14 - 29 O Ecclesiastes 8 O Ecclesiastes 9
JANUARY 15-21 2 Kings 13 - 14; Mark 4: 21 - 34 2 Kings 15; Mark 4: 35 - 41 2 Kings 16; Mark 5: 1 - 20 2 Kings 17; Mark 5: 21 - 43 2 Kings 18; Mark 6: 1 - 13	Extra Reading Control Contro
JANUARY 22-28 2 Kings 19; Mark 6: 14 - 29 2 Kings 20 - 21; Mark 6: 30 - 44 2 Kings 22; Mark 6: 45 - 56 2 Kings 23; Mark 7: 1 - 13 2 Kings 24 - 25; Mark 7: 14 - 23	Extra Reading O Proverbs 2 O Proverbs 3: 1 - 12 O Proverbs 3: 13 - 35 O Proverbs 4 O Proverbs 5

JANUARY 29 - FEBRUARY 4	Extra Reading
1 Chronicles 1; Mark 7: 24 - 30 1 Chronicles 2; Mark 7: 31 - 37 1 Chronicles 3 - 4; Mark 8: 1 - 10 1 Chronicles 5; Mark 8: 11 - 21 1 Chronicles 6; Mark 8: 22 - 30	 Proverbs 6: 1 - 19 Proverbs 6: 20 - 35 Proverbs 7 Proverbs 8: 1 - 21 Proverbs 8: 22 - 36
FEBRUARY 5-11	Extra Reading
1 Chronicles 7; Mark 8: 31- 9: 1 1 Chronicles 8; Mark 9: 2 - 13 1 Chronicles 9 - 10; Mark 9: 14 - 29 1 Chronicles 11; Mark 9: 30 - 37 1 Chronicles 12; Mark 9: 38 - 42	 Proverbs 9 Proverbs 10: 1 - 14 Proverbs 10: 15 - 32 Proverbs 11: 1 - 15 Proverbs 11: 16 - 31
FEBRUARY 12-18	Extra Reading
1 Chronicles 13 - 14; Mark 9: 43 - 50 1 Chronicles 15; Mark 10: 1 - 16 1 Chronicles 16; Mark 10: 17 - 31 1 Chronicles 17 - 18; Mark 10: 32 - 45 1 Chronicles 19 - 20; Mark 10: 46 - 52	 Proverbs 12 Proverbs 13 Proverbs 14: 1 - 21 Proverbs 14: 22 - 35 Proverbs 15: 1 - 19
FEBRUARY 19-25	Extra Reading
1 Chronicles 21; Mark 11: 1 - 11 1 Chronicles 22 - 23; Mark 11: 12 - 26 1 Chronicles 24 - 25; Mark 11: 27 - 33 1 Chronicles 26; Mark 12: 1 - 12 1 Chronicles 27 - 28; Mark 12: 13 - 27	 Proverbs 15: 20 - 33 Proverbs 16: 1 - 16 Proverbs 16: 17 - 33 Proverbs 17 Proverbs 18: 1 - 10
FEBRUARY 26 - MARCH 3	Extra Reading
1 Chronicles 29; Mark 12: 28 - 34 2 Chronicles 1 - 3; Mark 12: 35 - 44 2 Chronicles 4 - 5; Mark 13: 1 - 13 2 Chronicles 6; Mark 13: 14 - 27 2 Chronicles 7 - 8; Mark 13: 28 - 37	 Proverbs 18: 11 - 24 Proverbs 19 Proverbs 20: 1 - 19 Proverbs 20: 20 - 30 Proverbs 21: 1 - 15

Extra Reading
 Proverbs 21: 16 - 31 Proverbs 22: 1 - 16 Proverbs 22: 17 - 29 Proverbs 23: 1 - 18 Proverbs 23: 19 - 35
Extra Reading O Proverbs 24: 1 - 22 O Proverbs 24: 23 - 34 O Proverbs 25: 1 - 14 O Proverbs 25: 15 - 28 O Proverbs 26: 1 - 17
Extra Reading O Proverbs 26: 18 - 28 O Proverbs 27: 1 - 11 O Proverbs 27: 12 - 27 O Proverbs 28: 1 - 14 O Proverbs 28: 15 - 28
Extra Reading O Proverbs 29 O Proverbs 30: 1 - 14

