



MATTHEW

Practical,
Easy-to-Use Devotionals
Made for Families

Dear Parents,

Let us be the first to say that we are proud of you! Leading your family and children in Bible study is not easy.

There are two things we already know about you from this moment.

1. You love your kids because you are here.
2. You are wise because you are making a worthy investment of your time. Truly, you can't make a better investment than finding unique ways to pass down your faith.

We know that spiritual discussions are intimate and, therefore, tend to be *a little bit awkward*. You may feel nervous and scared, wondering how your kids are going to react. Others might have tried something similar that didn't work, so you want to be cautious.

If you have fears, you are not alone. Let's address some of them before we get started.

I'm afraid I don't have answers to questions. This fear is normal. Many parents don't start spiritual conversations because they are scared they won't have the answers. This tool is our attempt to ease those fears and give you guidance and resources.

I think my kids will find this boring, annoying, or stupid. Good news. As we spiritually lead our kids, we are responsible for our efforts, and not their response. We can't control their reaction, but we can control showing up and trying.

I don't think we will finish. More good news. This experience isn't a race. We're not trying to push through and meet a deadline. We want you to focus less on finishing and more on the spiritual conversations that occur within your family.

Whether you finish or not, it is more important to focus on your family's spiritual discussions, so we suggest you resist the temptation to overly value the finish line. Instead, we encourage you to define a goal. What is the goal you want to accomplish with this Series?

At M2P, we value faith and family, and we hope our Family Bible Series *inspires* many spiritual conversations for years to come. May the LORD, Jesus, and Holy Spirit move mightily within your family.

We are honored to partner with you,

The M2P Team

WHAT IS IT?

M2P's *Family Bible Series: Matthew* is designed to help parents have spiritual conversations as a family. It consists of two parts:

- ▶ BIG QUESTIONS. SIMPLE ANSWERS. (E-Book)
- ▶ MATTHEW (Devotionals)



BIG QUESTIONS. SIMPLE ANSWERS. is a brief e-book that offers a way to learn the Bible's Big Story in an easy-to-understand format. It's so simple that you can share it with your older children and teenagers after you read it! The topics are:

- What is the Bible?
- What is the Big Story of the Bible?
- Who is God's Family?
- Why do we have Four Gospels?



MATTHEW has three sections.*

Book Summary helps you answer questions and build your confidence as you study Matthew. In two pages, you learn the Setting, Overview, and Theme of the book of Matthew. Use this section to prepare your heart and mind with the 40,000-foot view of Matthew.

Reading Plan helps you avoid being overwhelmed. If the Book Summary gives you the "big picture," the Reading Plan breaks Matthew down chapter-by-chapter into seven themes.

Note: If you have young children, consider choosing a few key verses or stories from each chapter highlighting the text's theme.

Family Journals help guide the readers' thoughts through the chapter. Every journal sheet corresponds with a chapter in Matthew, and provides space to write (or draw for the little ones), share favorite words, and more. This section creates opportunities for spiritual conversations over dinner, at bedtime, or in the car.

Note: If you have young children, we suggest working together on the journal. If you have teenagers, offer printouts for an individualized plan.

**These tools are suggestions for spiritual conversations. Some kids like journal sheets, while others do not. You know your family best, so adapt the resources as needed*

HOW TO USE IT

- Browse through BIG QUESTIONS. SIMPLE ANSWERS. to understand the “big picture” in which the book of Matthew takes place. Decide how to best use it for your family.
- Browse through MATTHEW to familiarize yourself with the [Book Summary](#), [Reading Plan](#), and [Family Journals](#). Decide how to best use it for your family.
- Schedule a time to meet as a family and bring a print out of the [Reading Plan](#) and [Family Journal Chapter One](#).
- In the meeting, share your heart, hopes, and reasons for doing this together. Show them the Reading Plan, and then place it in an open area such as the kitchen or living room.

For Young Children

Read through Chapter One of Matthew beforehand and decide on key verses and stories you want to share.

Bring a print out of the [Family Journal Chapter One](#) and work through it as a family.

For Teenagers & Adults

Hand out the [Family Journal Chapter One](#).

Invite your teenager to read Chapter One from the book of Matthew.

Encourage them to use the journal page as a guide to their thoughts.

- Schedule a family dinner and use the Journal questions to facilitate spiritual conversations.
- Repeat with the corresponding chapters as best fits your family.

FAQ

What if my kids ask questions about verses I don't understand?

Great question! First, tell them you don't know the answer, but you'll try to find it. This shows them it's okay not to know everything. Second, find a trusted friend or mentor who shares your faith. Seek out answers to the questions.

Is the Reading Plan dated?

No. We chose an undated reading plan because each family is different. You can work through Matthew as it best fits your schedule. Is it dinner each night? Weekends? Find the right time for you.



Is this material for children or teenagers?

Both! We wrote this material for all ages.

What Scripture translation should I use?

Use the translation that best fits your family. For younger children, it may be helpful to include the paraphrase, *The Message*, to help summarize the text.