

# **Growth Guide**

## **June 2023**

# GROWTH GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

**WORSHIP SERIES:** NONE

**SERMON TITLE:** " BE . . . "

**DATE:** June 4, 2023

**SCRIPTURE:** Joshua 1:1-9 (NIV)

## The Author

The main figure of the book gives us the title: Joshua means "Yahweh" saves. It was Joshua who, with God's help, lead Israel to a victory in the Promised Land. The book includes many firsthand experiences and important military details recorded by someone who was high ranking. The book spans about 25 years just after the death of Moses. It begins with the people of Israel on the banks of the Jordan river, across from Jericho.

Military campaigns are recorded which gives us a glimpse at how the inhabitants were defeated. And in the end, we see Israel established as conquerors.

## Cross Reference(s)

Deuteronomy 31:23, Deuteronomy 3:28, Deuteronomy 11:24, Exodus 23:31, Deuteronomy 31:6-8, Daniel 10:19, 1 Chron 22:13, Psalm 119:15, Genesis 28:15, Jeremiah 1:7-8

## Theme

The book was a historical account written for descendants. It shows how their forefathers came to settle in Israel and surrounding areas. The book details the geographical boundaries of each tribe in Israel. God fulfills his promise to give Canaan land to Jacob's descendants in the book of Joshua.

## Key Places and People

Rahab the harlot, the battle of Jericho, Caleb, Achan's sin, Gibeonites, the burials of Joshua, Joseph, and Eleazar, 12 tribes

## Repeating Terms

Moses, strong, courageous, "give you", "be with you"

## Discussion Questions

1. Can you recall a family member teaching you a skill because they wanted to pass it down? What was that like for you? What skills are you passing down to your children, grandchildren, or family? What kind of training did Moses likely provide Joshua? Why do you think that is? What is God likely entrusting Joshua to do? What is God entrusting you to do?
2. How do you think Joshua felt about the mission given to him? What assurance was Joshua given along with the mission? Does this reassurance help us today? How does God reassure you?
3. How can we be prepared for great tasks? How would you encourage someone who had a big assignment? Since God had already promised the "promised land", what was Joshua's responsibility?
4. What would you aim to do if you were promised a victory? Can you think of other examples in scripture where people were given a promise by God, and then he fulfilled it?
5. Read Matthew 28:18-20. How should we approach this mission God has set before us? What holds us back?
6. Why are the words "**strong** and **courageous**" in the verse together? How are these ideas different? Why are both needed to fulfill God's purposes? In what areas of your life do you need **strength** and **courage**? Has God been repeating words or phrases to you lately?
7. Why was Joshua told to obey the law? Is it possible to fulfill God's will while being intentionally sinful? What can believers do to "meditate" in v 8? How does this help?
8. The word "**remember**" appears 227 times in the Bible. In what ways do we remember God's character, promises, and the blessings we've received? What does remembrance do for believers?
9. How can we pray for you?

# GROWTH GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

**WORSHIP SERIES:** *Man Vs. Wild*

**SERMON TITLE:** The Temptation of the Bread

**DATE:** June 11, 2023

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 4:1-4, Hebrews 4:15 (NIV)

## The Author

In the gospel of Matthew, he doesn't indicate that he is the author, but the early church and biblical scholars have all affirmed Matthew as the writer. His name is found in all lists of the 12 apostles. Mark and Luke refer to him as Levi. His profession as a tax collector sets him apart from the other disciples.

Jesus attended a feast in Matthew's home along with his sinful friends, and Matthew didn't think it strange that Jesus would sit down with the people society would frown upon.

Matthew had great attention to detail and carefully recorded the genealogy of Jesus, David, and Abraham in Matthew 1:1 as further proof of the divinity of Christ. His gospel paints a lovely portrait of the unique qualities of the Messiah.

## Key Places and People

Jesus, the Spirit, wilderness, the devil

## Cross Reference(s)

Hebrews 2:18, Mark 1:12-15, Exodus 34:28, Genesis 3:1-5, John 6:31-59

## Theme

Matthew's account of the ministry of Jesus shows he was the long awaited Messiah. The gospel of Matthew is the most Jewish centered of the gospels.

Matthew included more than 50 direct citations to the Old Testament, more than any other writer, to provide ample prophetic evidence for Jesus as the long-awaited savior.

## Repeating Terms

bread, tempted, fast, hungry, the word

## Timeline for Events in Matthew Ch 3-5

Jesus was baptized by John; **Jesus was tested**; Jesus begins his ministry; Jesus calls disciples; The Sermon on the Mount.

## Discussion Questions

1. Have you been tempted by something lately (for me, it's always dessert)? Why are we tempted? Who is the tempter? How do we respond? Does our response matter (aren't we sinful by nature anyway)?
2. Why did the Spirit lead Jesus into the wilderness? Why did Jesus teach us to pray "lead us not into temptation?" How do spiritual practices like fasting help? What was the devil trying to accomplish here?
3. The devil uses rocks and bread to taunt Jesus. Does the devil use rocks and bread to taunt us today? What does he use? Does he use different tests for different people? Why?
4. Does the devil know our weaknesses? How does he know this information?
5. Did the devil know who Jesus was? How does Jesus respond to this testing? Is this what you would have expected from Jesus? Is Jesus' response what the devil expected? What can we learn from Jesus' response?
6. Refer to the timeline for events in Ch 3-5 above. What stands out about the order of these events to you? Why do you think the devil tempted Jesus after his baptism and just before his ministry starts? What can we learn about keeping God's word and being prepared for the next big thing God has planned for us?
7. Read Genesis 3:1-6. What similarities do you see between the story in Genesis and the story in Matthew? What are the differences?
8. What advice would you give to someone who feels like the devil wants them to sacrifice their obedience to God for temporary enjoyment and satisfaction?
9. How is temptation an opportunity to depend on God?
10. How can we pray for you today?

# GROWTH GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

**WORSHIP SERIES:** *Man Vs. Wild*

**SERMON TITLE:** The Temptation of the Pinnacle

**DATE:** June 18, 2023

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 4:5-7, Exodus 17:2-3,7, Deuteronomy 6:16 (NIV)

## The Author

In the gospel of Matthew, he doesn't indicate that he is the author, but the early church and biblical scholars have all affirmed Matthew as the writer. His name is found in all lists of the 12 apostles. Mark and Luke refer to him as Levi. His profession as a tax collector sets him apart from the other disciples.

Jesus attended a feast in Matthew's home along with his sinful friends, and Matthew didn't think it strange that Jesus would sit down with the people society would frown upon.

Matthew had great attention to detail and carefully recorded the genealogy of Jesus, David, and Abraham in Matthew 1:1 as further proof of the divinity of Christ. His gospel paints a lovely portrait of the unique qualities of the Messiah.

## Key Places and People

Jesus, the devil, the holy city, the temple

## Cross Reference(s)

Luke 4:9, Deuteronomy 6:16, 1 John 2:15-16,

## Theme

Matthew's account of the ministry of Jesus shows he was the long awaited Messiah. The gospel of Matthew is the most Jewish centered of all the gospels. Matthew included more than 50 direct citations to the Old Testament, more than any other writer, to provide ample and prophetic evidence for Jesus as the long-awaited savior.

## Repeating Terms

angels, tempted, test, quarrel, thirst

## Timeline for Events in Matthew Ch 3-5

Jesus was baptized by John; **Jesus was tested**; Jesus begins his ministry; Jesus calls disciples; The Sermon on the Mount.

## Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever been tempted by the "wow" factor, like if a friend won the lottery, bought a luxury yacht, and invited you on a trip around the world? What are some other examples of the "wow" factor in society? Is it human nature to respond to sensationalism? Do people bargain with God for something spectacular? How should believers respond to the "wow"?
2. How was the devil's testing of Jesus an attempt to force the hand of the Father? Does the devil like to artificially create a crisis in order to get us to respond?
3. How does the devil appeal to our desire for approval and public displays of approval?
4. Why was it significant for Jesus to be taken to the "holy city?" Why was Jesus taken to the highest point in the land (the temple was said to be about 450 feet high)?
5. Why is it significant that the devil has memorized the Bible? What does this suggest about him?
6. Read Psalm 91:11-12 and compare it to Matthew 4:6. What did the devil leave out? Why do you think he did so?
7. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and Acts 20:27. What's the purpose of scripture? Why is it significant Satan used scripture to deceive? What's the "whole counsel of God?" How can we discern false prophets today? Why is it important each Christian study scripture for themselves?
8. How has God already proven his love to us?
9. How can we pray for you today?

# GROWTH GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

**WORSHIP SERIES:** *Man Vs. Wild*

**SERMON TITLE:** The Temptation of the World

**DATE:** June 25, 2023

**SCRIPTURE:** *Matthew 4:8-11, Matthew 16:24-26 (NIV)*

## The Author

In the gospel of Matthew, he doesn't indicate that he is the author, but the early church and biblical scholars have all affirmed Matthew as the writer. His name is found in all lists of the 12 apostles. Mark and Luke refer to him as Levi. His profession as a tax collector sets him apart from the other disciples.

Jesus attended a feast in Matthew's home along with his sinful friends, and Matthew didn't think it strange that Jesus would sit down with the people society would frown upon.

Matthew had great attention to detail and carefully recorded the genealogy of Jesus, David, and Abraham in Matthew 1:1 as further proof of the divinity of Christ. His gospel paints a lovely portrait of the unique qualities of the Messiah.

## Key Places and People

Jesus, the devil, the world

## Cross Reference(s)

Psalm 49:16-17, Revelation 22:8-9, Deuteronomy 6:13-14, Matthew 26:53, Matthew 10:38, John 12:25, Job 27:8

## Theme

Matthew's account of the ministry of Jesus shows he was the long awaited Messiah. The gospel of Matthew is the most Jewish centered of all the gospels. Matthew included more than 50 direct citations to the Old Testament, more than any other writer, to provide ample and prophetic evidence for Jesus as the long-awaited savior.

## Repeating Terms

angels, tempted, kingdom

## Timeline for Events in Matthew Ch 3-5

Jesus was baptized by John; **Jesus was tested**; Jesus begins his ministry; Jesus calls disciples; The Sermon on the Mount.

## Discussion Questions

1. Do you know of anyone in the news who sadly, had to pay a high personal cost because they wanted the world? Some examples include Pete Rose, Richard Nixon, Bernie Madoff. Why are humans tempted by worldly things? What can we learn from their mistakes?
2. In verse 9, what does the devil really want? Is pride and wanting to be worshipped the same thing?
3. Did the devil want a short cut to being in charge? Is there a short cut to the cross? How can we guard against wanting to be the one in control? How do we show our trust in God that HE is the one in control?
4. Read Genesis 3:17-24. God gave Adam stewardship over the earth, and the serpent arrived. What was the result of Adam's disobedience in Genesis Ch 3? Why is the world fallen? Why is Satan allowed in? Read Revelation 20:7-10, "The Judgment of Satan." What will happen to Satan and evil one day?
5. How does Jesus combat the devil in verse 10? How does Jesus win? What power have believers been given to combat the devil? How will you use this the next time you feel under attack spiritually?
6. The devil then flees in verse 11. Is this what you had expected? Why? Is the devil really as powerful as he thinks he is? How do you know? How does this understanding change you?
7. God sends angels to attend to Jesus in verse 11. Why did the Father do this for the Son? Why does the devil want us to be in a state of utter exhaustion?
8. What do you think the angels did for Jesus (read about Elijah in 1 Kings 19:5-8)? How is this important to us when we remember God's promises?
9. How do we guard our hearts against deception? How can you make sure you always have "fresh bread" as a weapon against lies and confusion? How can we pray for you today?