

2014/15 Edition

LIVING

HIGH SCHOOL OUTREACH



The Pathfinder Bible Experience Application Guide

A team Bible knowledge challenge for
Matthew



North
American
Division
Pathfinder
Ministries

2014 Edition

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Introduction

King David didn't have a Bible and he never sat on a hillside reading a devotional book. He probably couldn't even read—and yet he knew God as well as anyone who ever walked the face of planet earth. In fact most people you read about in the Bible were illiterate so they memorized large portions of the Bible as they listened to it being recited by their parents and read by the priests and scribes in the local synagogues and the Sanctuary. It was by listening and memorizing it for himself that David learned to love the Bible. Throughout Psalms David talks about how much he loves the Sanctuary and God's law—he even says he meditated on it day and night.

The most important passage of scripture in ancient Jewish culture is the Shema:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and
with all your soul and with all your strength.

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.

Impress them on your children.

Talk about them when you sit at home
and when you walk along the road,
when you lie down and when you get up.

When you sit down and immerse yourself in scripture—spending long periods of time in just a few verses—you are following in the footsteps of the ancient Israelites and Jesus Himself. Reflecting on Scripture and memorizing it's lessons locks it in your mind where no one can take it from you.

This Living it Application Guide is to help you in this journey of understanding scripture and especially with Living it. The chapter guides are not comprehensive—they do not cover every detail of each chapter—that would take a few hundred pages. Each chapter guide chooses a few key points to help you start thinking differently about Scripture—to remember it and internalize it. The guides for the chapters are structured as follows:

1. Warm Up: Questions for individual reflection/small group discussion. These questions will attempt to help the participants relate aspects of their own lives to the lives of the Bible characters. This will involve personal sharing.
2. Engaging the Passage: This will include some discussion of the passage and one or more of the following:
 - a. Entering the passage as a participant or bystander to help imagine the scene.
 - b. Relevant historical/background information.
 - c. Reflection/discussion questions that go deeper into the passage
3. Applying the Passage to Your Life
 - a. Thought provoking application questions
 - b. Calls for commitment to action
4. Time of Prayer: May include any or all of the following:
Adoration/confession/requests/praises/silent prayer/conversational prayer

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

— JOHN 17:17 (NKJV)

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophets' own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

— 2 PETER 1:20-21 (NIV)

It is not safe for us to turn from the Holy Scriptures with only a casual reading of their sacred pages... Rein the mind up to the high task that has been set before it, and study with determined interest, that you may understand divine truth. Those who do this will be surprised to find what the mind can attain. The mind must be restrained and not allowed to wander. It should be trained to dwell upon the Scriptures and upon noble, elevating themes. Portions of Scripture, even whole chapters, may be committed to memory to be repeated when Satan comes in with his temptations.

— ELLEN G. WHITE

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Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

— PSALMS 119:105 (NKJV)

5. Outreach Ideas: Some chapter guides will include ideas for getting outside of yourself or your group and reaching the world around you—that's how you Live it!

The recommended companions for this series are: Andrews Study Bible, Authentic: Committed for Life, by Scott R. Ward, <http://livingiths.org/resources/pathfinders>

May Jesus Christ Himself bless you richly as you embark on this journey to making God's Word a Living and vital part of who you are.

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Chapter Guide Outline:

1. Warm-up

Questions for individual reflection/small group discussion. These questions will attempt to help participants relate aspects of their own lives to the lives of Bible characters. This will involve personal sharing.

2. Engaging the Chapter

This will include some discussion of the chapter and one or more of the following:

- a. Entering the verses as a participant or bystander to help imagine the scene
- b. Relevant historical/background information
- c. Reflection/discussion questions that go deeper into the chapter

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life

- a. Thought provoking application questions
- b. Calls for commitment to action

4. Time of Prayer

May include any or all of the following: Adoration/confession/requests/praises/silent prayer/conversational prayer.

5. Outreach Ideas

Some chapter guides include ideas for getting outside of your group and reaching the world around you—that's how you live it!

Recommended Companions for this Series

Andrews Study Bible, <http://bible.andrews.edu>

Authentic: Committed for Life by Scott R. Ward, www.adventistbookcenter.com

Living It High School Outreach Resources for Pathfinders, <http://livingiths.org/resources/pathfinders>

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Matthew Chapter 1

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. How many generations back do you know your ancestors? Talk about or write down something you know about your parents, grandparents, great grandparents and great, great grandparents.

- b. Tell your favorite story about something that happened to your parents or grandparents when they were your age.

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Background: Matthew begins his gospel by going through all the ancestors of Jesus. Most people today think this is really boring but it was important for Matthew to do this because it was important to the people he was writing to. Back then people were very proud of who their ancestors were—especially if they were descendants of someone important. And it was especially important for people reading the book of Matthew back then to know that Jesus was the descendant of King David. This was especially important because well known prophecies said that the Messiah would be from the “House of David.”

Have you ever seen any of the Chronicles of Narnia or The Lord of the Rings movies? The epic battle scenes just where I live in California, I have friends that are from Filipino, African, Chinese, Mexican and other cultures. Do you have any friends that are from a different culture than you are? Have a discussion with some friends or in your small group about things that one culture values more than another. Things like music, types of food and entertainment. What do you think makes different cultures value different things?

What are some things that you value more or less than your parents?

What are some things that you value more or less than your friends?

What can you do to help you get along better with people who value things differently than you do?

How can the things you are learning from these discussions help you to understand and value the Bible more?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one or two:

- a. Watch one of the Chronicles of Narnia movies or another Bible movie with epic battle scenes to try and a. Do some research on a culture that you have tended to be judgmental of in the past and try to understand it better. If possible sit down with someone from that culture and ask them to tell you about their world and what it is like to be a part of that culture.
- b. Ask someone from your parents or grandparents generation to tell you stories from when they were a child. Ask them what the world was like and how things are different now.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Spend a few minutes praying for peace in the middle east and other places where there is frequent racial conflict. Pray for people to be more understanding and accepting of each other. Pray for God to give you a greater love and understanding of those who are different from you.

Matthew Chapter 2

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Talk about how most people act when they are about to have a baby. Discuss the preparations that take place and how people feel. Does it make a difference if the baby was planned or not?

- b. Do you think dads and moms think about different things when they are getting ready to have a baby? What do you think some of those things might be? Do you think it's good or bad for two people to have a different focus on the same event? What other kinds of events might this happen with?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Have you ever wished you could ask God a question and He would answer in a voice as clear as your mom or In this part of the story (Matthew 1:18-2:23) Joseph and Mary were both surprised by the fact that Mary was pregnant. This was such an important pregnancy that both Mary and Joseph were visited by angels (Mary's angelic visit is recorded in the gospel of Luke) to receive instructions on what to do next and to make sure they knew it was a miracle from God.

Do you think Mary and Joseph felt differently about Jesus' birth? Why/why not? What impact do you think the angelic visits had on the way they felt? How would you feel if an angel came to you with a special message? How would you know it was really an angel and not a trick from the Devil?

The next thing this passage talks about is some kings visiting from a foreign land. Do you know how old you were when you received your first out of town visitor? How do you think it made your parents feel to know people loved them so much that they wanted to come and meet you? How do you think Joseph and Mary felt about their foreign visitors and the amazing gifts they brought?

Next the passage talks about Mary, Joseph and Jesus fleeing to Egypt and then a few years later coming back. Do you think that the angel that told them to flee to Egypt was the same one that told them they were going to have a baby? How do you think Mary and Joseph knew it was God and not a demon talking to them in dreams (or maybe just really bad indigestion)? What would have happened if Joseph and Mary hadn't believed the angel on any of the 3 different occasions that he visited them?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Discuss how important it is for you to learn to recognize the voice of God and what kinds of messages He might send to you through angels. Think of three ways that you can be more like Mary and Joseph and learn to recognize His voice while you are still young.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray for God to remind you to spend time with Him everyday and for Him to make His voice known to you. Ask Him to be your best friend and to make the Bible easier to understand when you read it.

5. Outreach Idea

Find a local women's shelter and ask if they need any clothes or toys for newborn babies. Organize a baby clothes drive to collect these needed supplies for these babies that may or may not have been expected by their parents who must be living in difficult circumstances. Make sure to include a book that talks about baby Jesus.

Matthew Chapter 3

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever seen a street preacher on a corner with a big cross yelling and telling everyone that they are sinners and they need to repent? How did you feel when you see and hear someone like that? Does it make you want to confess your sins and try hard to be better? Why/why not?

- b. Who is the most interesting person you have ever met? What is it that makes them so interesting?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter John the Baptist steps onto the scene. He was preaching in the wilderness instead of in a church. He was telling people to repent because God was coming soon. He wore clothes made of camel hair and he ate locusts and wild honey. Some people think the locusts were bugs and others think they were a plant. In either case he ate weird food, wore strange clothes and preached in an unconventional place.

Why do you think people came from all over to listen to him?

Would you go and listen to someone fitting this description today?

What is the difference between one of today's street preachers and John the Baptist?

How would you feel if someone like this came and started arguing with the pastor and head elder at your church? Who's side would you take? How would you know who is right and who is wrong?

If you look at the other passages (especially Luke 1) you will see that the reason John the Baptist was such a powerful and successful preacher, wasn't because of anything great about himself, but because he was specially chosen by God to give that message. Everything about John the Baptist was miraculous in some way: The prophecies that foretold his birth, the way his father was told that he would be born, the fact that his mother was so old and yet conceived, and the way he lived with such dedication to God and his mission. He was one of the most unselfish people that ever walked the planet.

Do you think that with so many miracles surrounding John's life there was any way he could mess it up? Do you think he was forced to be good or did he have a choice?

Why do you think it was so important for the Holy Spirit to not only fill John's life, but the lives of his parents as well?

Does this show in any way the importance of family worship and attending church together? Why/why not?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one or two:

- a. Sit down and talk to your parents about your spiritual life. Talk to them about the spiritual influences in your life like church, Sabbath school, family prayer times and worship. Talk about what you can do together as a family to be more spiritual and what you can each do individually as well. Make a list of 3 goals that can help your family grow closer to Jesus.
- b. Search the internet and your local Christian bookstore for tools that can help families to grow closer to Jesus and be better witnesses to each other and those they meet.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to fill your home and each person who lives there. Ask Jesus to help you think of Him more often, to remember the lessons you've learned from scripture and to help each of you to be kinder to each other and more helpful

Matthew Chapter 4

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Name one temptation that you struggle with. Why do you think that giving in to this temptation is wrong? What do you think makes it so tempting? How do you feel when you fall for this temptation?

- b. Name a good activity that you enjoy engaging in. Why do you think this activity is good? Why do you think you enjoy it so much? How does it make you feel when you are involved in this activity?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

This chapter starts out by saying that it was the Spirit that led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted. How do you feel about that? Do you think it was cruel of God to send the Holy Spirit to do such a thing? Did anything good come from the temptations in the wilderness? Who was hurt by this experience? Who benefited from this experience?

Can you identify any times when you think God may have allowed you to be tempted? Do you think this temptation helped or hurt you? Why/why not?

The first two temptations, according to Matthew, was in regards to Jesus' identity. Satan said, "if" you are the Son of God... Why do you think Satan said, "if"? After 40 days of fasting Jesus must have been terribly worn down, exhausted, and ready for this ordeal to be over. He had surely experienced some tremendous communion with God but now His body was breaking down from the experience and He may have been getting weak. Satan wanted to tempt Jesus to use His supernatural powers for Himself rather than others here and he hinged it on Jesus' relationship with His Father. The temptation was essentially: "If you are God, stop trusting in your Father to take care of you and take things into your own hands. Show that YOU have power and satisfy your hunger yourself."

Why do you think it would have been wrong for Jesus to satisfy His own hunger in this situation? Can you think of a time in scripture where Jesus used His supernatural abilities for Himself?

Have you ever been tempted to take things into your own hands rather than trust in Jesus to show you the way? How did the situation turn out? What do you wish you had done differently?

Why do you think it is better to wait for Jesus to guide you rather than using your own judgment?

How do you know when to wait for God versus when to take decisive action?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one or two:

- a. Have a discussion with your small group and/or a spiritual adult that you know to think of ways that you can learn to trust in Jesus more and to develop more patience while waiting for His guidance.
- b. Just like Jesus spent lots of time with His Father before He was tempted, try to think of ways that you can spend more time with Jesus so that you can be prepared for temptation as well.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

In your small group, and individually, pray for people that you know are going through trying times right now. Pray that they will spend time with Jesus and be able to hear His guiding voice clearly.

Next pray for your personal relationship with Jesus. Pray that you will remember to spend more time with Him so that you can recognize His voice and follow His guidance more easily.

Matthew Chapter 5

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Why do you think people need friends? Is it more important to be a good friend or to have a good friend? Why?

- b. How do you choose your friends? Tell your group about one of your friends and why you choose to spend time with him/her.

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

At the end of the last chapter Jesus started choosing His disciples. His disciples were His closest friends while He was on planet earth. Jesus chose His friends based on His mission in life. When He asked them to follow Him He told them, "I will show you how to fish for people!" As soon as Jesus chose His closest friends they dropped their jobs as fishermen and followed Jesus around listening to Him teach and watching Him heal people. They were His helpers in His mission to save the people of planet earth.

When you are choosing new friends is it more important to you that they are popular or that they are good Christians? Why?

Have you ever seen one of your friends influenced negatively by one of their other friends? What happened? How did that impact you?

Not long after Jesus chose His disciples He preached the longest sermon recorded in the Bible and it is called the Sermon on the Mount. In this sermon there is a lot of practical advice for helping people to make wise choices and decisions in life.

Do you like listening to long or short sermons? Why? Does it matter what the sermon is about? Why/why not?

Do you feel like most sermons and other Christian teachings you hear are practical and easy to apply to your life? Why?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Have a discussion with your friends and a Christian adult about how to make Christianity more practical and relevant in your life. Talk with either your pathfinder leader, Sabbath school teacher or pastor about ways to live out your faith in your home, church and community

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray for Jesus to help you to understand the connection between belief and action. Pray for Jesus to help you see opportunities to help others that you meet on a daily basis.

5. Outreach Idea

Ask your pathfinder leader, Sabbath school teacher or pastor to help you plan a humanitarian outreach project in your community that will help you to put your faith into action. Ask them about homeless ministries, VBS ministries and ways to help out with tutoring younger students who need help. Look at some of the outreach ideas found on the Living it website (livingiths.org).

Matthew Chapter 6

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. What is the first thought that comes to your mind when you think about poor people? Why do you think that is your first thought? Do you wish you had a different attitude towards the poor?

- b. How do you think most people treat the poor? Do you think this is good or bad? Do you think most poor people choose to be poor in some way? Why/why not?

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

This chapter features more of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus continues to give some practical advice on how to live your life. One of the teachings in the middle of this chapter is on fasting and praying. What role do you think fasting and praying should play in people's lives today? Why?

Do you think people fasted and prayed more in Bible times or today? Why?

Why do you think fasting and prayer should go together?

Can you also pray without fasting?

It is important to understand that fasting isn't just from food—it can also be from TV, internet, music, the shopping mall etc. The point is to give up something you normally do and to spend extra time with Jesus and helping others during that time instead.

What activities do you think would be the easiest for you to fast from? Why?

What activities do you think would be the hardest for you to fast from? Why?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one or two:

- a. Make a list of all the topics included in the Sermon on the Mount. Keep this list somewhere that you will see it every morning. At the end of each day put a mark by the teachings that you were able to live out that day.
- b. Spend some time on the website: restoreachild.org. Make plans to research this website with your pathfinder club or Sabbath school class and learn as much as you can about this organization's work to help suffering children in other countries

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Start praying for orphans around the world—especially for those in the countries where Restore a Child is working. Also pray for less fortunate people in the area where you live and ask the Holy Spirit to help you see ways to reach out and help them. Pray for Jesus to give you an unselfish spirit.

5. Outreach Idea

Talk to your pathfinder club or Sabbath school class about signing up to participate in the “DO Fast” talked about on the Restore a Child website and organize a 24 hour fast for your group. Ask your parents and pastor to help you promote this activity with your entire church.

Matthew Chapter 7

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. When you are praying for something, how often do you pray for it? Once, twice, three times? What determines how frequently you pray for something?

- b. When you pray is it typically for things or situations or is it more of a conversation? Explain?

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this last chapter that is part of the Sermon on the Mount Jesus' teachings get shorter and He covers a lot more topics: Not judging, effective prayer, the golden rule, the narrow gate, the tree and its fruit, true disciples and building on a solid foundation. Do these seem to be just a bunch of random ideas or is there something unifying the topics of this chapter?

In the Andrews Study Bible the commentators say that in the Sermon on the Mount Matthew is trying to encourage people to compare Jesus with Moses. So it seems that Matthew is laying out a bunch of Jesus' teachings in rapid succession somewhat like the 10 Commandments. The interesting thing is that Jesus was actually the one who gave Moses the 10 Commandments on Mount Sinai thousands of years earlier! In the end we could probably sum up the teachings in the Sermon on the Mount the same way Jesus sums up the 10 Commandments in Matthew 22: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and soul, and love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:37-40).

If the point is to love God and others, why do you think the Pharisees made so many thousands of little rules back in their day? Do you think it was possible for anyone to keep all those rules?

If the point is to love God and others why do you think there are 10 Commandments instead of just this one?

How many rules do you need in your life today to help you feel like you know what is expected of you and for you to feel like you are doing what you should?

Do you and your parents agree on how many rules that should be?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one or two:

- a. Sit down with your parents and tell them about this lesson and what you've learned. See if you can come up with a short list of rules that you are both comfortable with that will help you to understand each other better and their expectations of you.

- b. Make up a list of realistic expectations you have of your parents. Things like: love, respect, etc... Explain to your parents what would be meaningful to you about these expectations.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask Jesus to be the leader of your home and for the influence of the Holy Spirit to be felt there each day. Pray that He will help you establish good guidelines that will help you to stay close to your family and to Him.

Matthew Chapter 8

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

a. What is your favorite story of someone being healed in Bible times? Tell the story with as much detail as you can remember. Why is this story your favorite healing story?

b. What is your favorite story of someone being healed in modern times? Tell the story with as much detail as you can remember. Why do you love this story?

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter Matthew tells several stories of Jesus healing people, Jesus calming a huge storm, and then casting the demons out of two men. In the midst of all these miracles and excitement there is a short passage called, “The Cost of Following Jesus.” Here it seems that people are getting so excited about Jesus and all the cool stuff he can provide and all the amazing miracles He can perform that some people are thinking they would like to be a superstar too! They must have been something like rockstar groupies trying to get famous by association. So, Jesus sat down and told them how it really was. He told them that He was so committed to His mission that He was basically homeless and didn’t even visit His mom regularly. His overwhelmingly number one priority was carrying out the mission that His Father had sent Him on to save the people of planet earth.

Do you have a clear mission in life? What all does it entail?
Do you wish you had a clearer mission in life? Why/why not?

What kind of causes are you more drawn to? Things like missions, humanitarian organizations, military campaigns, sports teams or other forms of entertainment? Why do you think that is?

If Jesus was walking planet earth today do you think you would be drawn to Him and want to follow Him—even if it meant being homeless? Why/why not?

Do you think it would have been easier to live Jesus' lifestyle back then than it is now? Why/why not?

 **3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)**

Sit down with a small group and discuss what it would look like to follow Jesus today. What kind of lifestyle do you think He would live? Do you think He would be forced to own or rent a home in 21st century America? What kind of causes do you think Jesus would want you to be involved in and which ones do you think He would be involved in Himself? Discuss how you can adjust your lifestyle to fit in more with how Jesus would live if He was here today.

 **4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)**

Pray and ask Jesus to help you look at your lifestyle realistically and ask Him to show you how you should begin implementing some of those ideas in your life now.

Matthew Chapter 9

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever judged someone in some way and then later realized you were wrong? Describe what happened?

- b. Has someone ever judged you incorrectly or tried to make other people believe you were a different kind of person than you really are? How did that make you feel?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In the middle of this chapter Jesus called Matthew, the tax collector, to follow Him. The Pharisees were apparently okay with fishermen and other such simple people but when Jesus called a tax collector they got really upset! Verse 10 says that, “Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners.” Then in verse 11 the NLT says the Pharisees asked Jesus’ disciples why their master eats with such, “scum!”

Can you imagine your pastor calling anyone scum? What does this say about these religious leaders? Doesn’t the Bible say to love everyone?

Why do you think Jesus intentionally reached out to people despised by the Jewish society to become His followers?

Do you think Jesus was intentionally trying to make friends with people known for being sinners? Why/why not?

If Jesus hadn't reached out to this group of people, who do you think would have?

Is it ever a temptation for you to think of other people or people groups as scum, or as lower class than you? Why/why not?

Do you think Jesus placed people in classes? Why/why not?

 **3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)**

In this passage Jesus said that it is not the healthy people that need a doctor—sick people do. Try to think of some people in your community that are sick and in need of a doctor—especially a spiritual doctor.

Do some research on the people groups that live in your area. Find out why they may have emigrated to your area if they are from another country. Try to find out if they were fleeing persecution of some kind or if they were fleeing poverty and trying to find more opportunity for their children and grandchildren to make a better life. How do you think you could help these people find a better life for themselves?

 **4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)**

Pray and ask Jesus to change your attitude about people that you typically see as lower class than yourself. Ask Him to help you value and find ways to reach out to these people or people groups.

Matthew Chapter 10

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Who is the unlikeliest friend you've ever had? That means someone you thought you would never be friends with but ended up being a good friend. How did it happen?

- b. Is there someone you were sure you would be friends with because you had so much in common but it didn't end up working out? Why do you think it didn't work out?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter Jesus gives Matthew the tax collector—the guy who hangs out with sinners—power to cast out demons and perform miracles. Wow! Can you believe that? He also gave the same power to Judas, who would betray him. In addition to them there was a few fishermen, some other common guys and a zealot... Zealots in Bible times believed in armed rebellion against the Romans and we know from the story of Jesus' arrest that Peter carried a sword as well.

No Pharisees or scribes or anyone with a great education or official spiritual training... Sounds like a bunch of misfits and rebels with God's blessing and power! How do you think it happened that Jesus chose such unlikely people?

Do you think Jesus ever had to manage fights within this motley crew? Can you think of one such incident the Bible records?

Do you think Jesus had limited options on whom He could choose as followers or do you think these guys were really the best Israel had to offer? Why/why not?

At this point in the story most of the disciples were still looking for a Messiah that would kick out the Romans with military means. Why do you think Jesus would send these guys out with so much power when they still really had no idea what His mission was about?

How long did it take for these guys to figure out what Jesus' mission really was?

If there was hope for Matthew and the other disciples back then, do you think there is hope for you and your friends today? Why/why not?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

If you could do anything to help prepare yourself to be a disciple of Jesus what would it be? Would it be more training on how to study the Bible, how to conduct outreach programs or something else? Have a discussion with your Pathfinder or youth group leader and your pastor to discuss how they can help you be better prepared to work with Jesus in His mission to save the people of planet earth.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray for Jesus to help you see yourself the way He does. Pray for Him to help you see the potential in yourself that He sees in you. Pray that He will help you to be willing to be used by Him with the understanding that it is His power and ability that are important and that all you need to be is willing.

5. Outreach Idea

Based on the outreach ideas and opportunities you have researched earlier in this Application Guide, plan another outreach activity for your group with the help of your leaders.

Matthew Chapter 11

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever been disappointed at the results of an outreach project that you thought would be amazing but wasn't? Why/why not?

- b. Have you ever been surprised at how successful and outreach project was? Why/why not?

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

This chapter focuses on John the Baptist who was sitting in prison. After successfully being used by the Holy Spirit to draw huge crowds to the wilderness to listen to his preaching about the coming Messiah and baptizing hundreds, including Jesus Himself, John is now locked up like a common criminal.

How do you think he felt? Abandoned and forgotten, or do you think he may have felt like he was mistaken about his whole mission? Why?

Why do you think Jesus never visited John in prison? Do you think it may have jeopardized Jesus' mission? Why?

How do you think John would have responded to a visit from Jesus? Why?

Why do you think John still had some disciples with Him while he was in prison?

Do you think that they didn't believe Jesus was the Messiah?

After John sent messengers to ask Jesus if He really was the Messiah and they came back talking about the amazing miracles, do you think John felt satisfied that he had done the right thing and that his mission was accomplished? Why/why not?

Do you think it's possible that someone may have told John all the wonderful things Jesus said about him after his disciples left that day? How do you think it would have made him feel if he had heard what Jesus said? Why?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

As a human being John probably had his ups and downs in prison. That's why he sent messengers to ask Jesus if He really was the One even after baptizing Him and seeing God's favor poured out there by the river. He may have been confused and grateful all at the same time.

What do you do when you feel this way? It is completely human to have doubts and to search for answers. If you have ever felt confused or had doubts about your relationship with Jesus you are completely normal and it will probably happen again. It doesn't mean you aren't a good person or have slipped in your Christian walk, it just means you are human.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask Jesus to strengthen your faith and draw you closer to Him. Ask Him to reassure you every day and help you to spend more time with Him growing closer.

Matthew Chapter 12

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Is the Sabbath your favorite day of the week? Why/why not?

- b. What do you think an ideal Sabbath would be like of? What would you do?

- c. What do you think Sabbath will be like in heaven? What do you think you will do? Why?

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter Jesus is continuing to teach His disciples about His mission here on earth. At this point they have spent time out on their own doing ministry (chapter 10) and now they are back together for more training and un-training. Un-training because they have to un-learn some of the things the Pharisees and other religious leaders of their day taught.

In this story Jesus and His friends love to live for God and go on his missions every day of the week—including Sabbath. For them the Sabbath was not a day to lay around and sleep—it was a day of active service. The Pharisees, on the other hand, made thousands of rules to keep the people from doing much of anything. In fact the religious leaders were so paranoid about someone accidentally working or sinning in some way that they often stood around almost like Sabbath police watching the people's every move. So, if you are wondering how and why the Pharisees saw Jesus and His disciples off in some random grain field eating a few kernels of grain that's how and why. In fact it's possible that the Pharisees may have even had undercover agents following Jesus and His disciples to watch for such a terrible crime as this!

How do you think the religious system of Jesus' day had gotten to be so legalistic? Do you think it may have been an over-reaction to all of the apostasies of the Israelites throughout their previous history? Why/why not?

Do you think you would have enjoyed or hated living under that religious system?

Do you think all the rules would have given you the security that you could know that what you were doing was right or would it have driven you crazy? Why?

Do you think that you live under a better religious system to day or worse? Explain?

What is the difference between living under a religious system versus focusing on a personal relationship with Jesus? What do you think Jesus' disciples were focused on—following rules or getting to know Jesus? Which do you think is better or is a combination of some kind ideal? Explain?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Take a long hard look at your life and try to determine how much your spiritual experience revolves around rules and how much it revolves around relationships. Talk with your parents, youth leaders and/or pastor to try and determine how many rules you really need to help guide you into a better relationship with Jesus. Just like we talked about in lesson 7, it's important to have some rules, but too many can crush the relationship.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask Jesus to help you structure your relationship with Him in a healthy way that will help you to grow closer to Him. Be specific as you pray through all the outreach activities, restful times in nature, time spend in scripture and other activities you engage in with Him.

Matthew Chapter 13

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. How do you learn best? By reading, or listening to facts, or by listening to stories, or some other way? Explain.

- b. What kind of stories are your favorite: Scary ones, silly ones, mysterious ones or some other kind? Why?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter we see Jesus beginning to teach in parables. So far in the book of Matthew Jesus has given lots of straight-forward teachings, including in the sermon on the mount, and in other places as well. In some instances He has used illustrations about people being light and salt, etc.—but no parables.

What is the difference between a parable and another kind of story?

Why do you think Jesus waited until now to use parables?

Why do you think Jesus used parables at all? Why did He say He used them when His disciples asked?

Why do you think Jesus told parables about farmers, shepherds and fishermen instead of about Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees?

Do you know how Jesus' parables differed from the ones the Pharisees told? (consult you Andrews Study Bible if you are not sure. See on verse 3).

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Write a parable that will help people to understand something about you or your life that they don't understand very well now. Ask your friends to help give you some ideas. Write it down so that you don't forget the details. Share your finished parable with your friends and ask them if it makes sense and also ask how you could make it better

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray for Jesus to help you understand the teachings of the parables clearly. Ask Jesus to help you learn to use everyday illustrations to help you communicate the gospel to the people you meet and talk to—including your friends and family members.

Matthew Chapter 14

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. What is the scariest thing that has ever happened to you? Describe it in detail. What made it so scary?

- b. Describe the funniest thing that has ever happened to you. Why did you think it was so funny?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter Herod had John the Baptist beheaded. When Jesus heard about what happened to His cousin he left for a remote area so that He could be alone.

Why do you think Jesus wanted to be alone? Do you think it reminded Him of the prophecies that foretold that He would be imprisoned and killed one day soon as the well? Why/why not?

What do you do when you get bad news? Do you ever want to be alone? Where do you go? What do you do to deal with difficult or sad situations? Do you feel like you could use help in learning to deal with difficulties? Why?

Even though Jesus was probably sad and just wanted to be alone the crowds followed Him and brought all their friends who needed healing. Are you surprised that Jesus unselfishly gave up His alone time to help others? Why/why not?

Are you aware of any times when your parents, youth leaders or pastor have given up personal time or things they really wanted to do in order to help you in some way or be with you? Explain. How often have you thanked the adults that help you in your life for all they do for you?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one or two:

- a. Think about all the difficult times you have been through in your life. Try to determine if you could benefit from a good book or website on dealing with pain and difficult situations. Ask your pastor and youth leaders for good resources that you could use when you feel like you need help.
- b. Visit: <http://livingiths.org/resources/at-risk-help> and browse the topics there so that you are familiar with the help provided so that you can be prepared to help your friends should they ever need it.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Make a prayer list and pray for the people you know that are suffering.
- b. Remember to put down situations that you are dealing with as well.
- c. Have special prayer for your pastor, Sabbath School leaders, Pathfinder leaders and other youth leaders as well. Pray that they will have people that they can talk to when they are going through difficult times as well.
- d. Thank Jesus for always being there for you and pray for Him to have comfort as He continues to deal with the Great Controversy that is obviously very painful for Him. He never wanted the world to turn out like this.

5. Outreach Idea

Take some time to write a few thank you notes to the important adults in your life that have helped you in some way. As you write your notes be sure to include as many important details as you can remember about why their help was so important to you.

Matthew Chapter 15

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Has someone famous or very important ever come to visit you? How did it make you feel? What did you do during the visit?

- b. What is the most meaningful visit you have ever received? Who was it that came to visit? What did you do? Why was the visit so special?

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter some Pharisees and teachers of religious law from Jerusalem came to visit Jesus. As the story unfolds it quickly becomes apparent that it was not a friendly visit. The religious leaders were upset that Jesus wasn't upholding their standards. But even though Jesus was in trouble with these religious leaders of His day he wasn't afraid. Why do you think that was?

Do you think it is possible for the religious leaders of our day to be mistaken about some things? Why/why not? How should we respond to mistakes by leaders in our day? Why?

Have your parents ever admitted to making a mistake in front of you? How did that make you feel to know that your parents could make mistakes? How did it make you feel when they admitted it?

Do you think there will ever come a time when you will be perfect and no longer make mistakes? Explain?

How important is it for a person to know that what they are doing is right? Is it easier to stand up for what you believe if you are thoroughly convinced it is correct? Why/why not?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Think through all the reasons why you go to church and pathfinders, etc. Ask yourself why you are involved in these activities. Write down any questions you may have about them. If you feel like you would like to learn more about God and the Bible ask your Pathfinder leader, youth leader or pastor if they would be willing to teach you more or show you where you find some good Bible study materials to help you find answers to your questions.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask God to help you to understand more about Him. Tell Him that you don't want to just go through the motions of being a Christian or follow rules that you don't understand. Pray that He will bring people into your life that can help you to understand more.

Matthew Chapter 16

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

- a. Do you ever worry about what other people think of you? Do you know other people how worry about what others think of them? Do you think this is a common human issue? Why/why not? Give as many details as you can.

- b. Talk about how your view of Jesus has changed as you've grown older. Start with your earliest memory of Jesus and what you thought about Him as a small child and how your understanding has grown over time.

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter Jesus is working on clarifying His identity with the people around Him—including His disciples. Jesus starts out by asking His disciples who “the people” think He is. Jesus wasn’t asking what other people thought of Him because He was insecure or worried like so many of us are today. It seems more like He was trying to get a clear message through to His disciples so that they could help clear up other people’s misconceptions—that’s why He went on to ask His disciples, “But who do you say I am? (vs. 15).”

When Peter answered correctly Jesus praised him highly and made an awesome pronouncement of Peter’s future role in Jesus’ mission to plant the Christian church. But then just a few verses after that (vs. 23) Peter says the wrong thing and Jesus looks at him and says, “Get away from me, Satan!”

Do you think Peter felt confused or embarrassed by the fact that he could say the right thing one minute and then wrong thing the next—from one extreme to another? Do you think he just got lucky with his answer the first time? How do you think Peter could be so right and then be so wrong?

Have you ever done something like Peter did in a class or with your friends? Explain. How did it make you feel? One obvious point here is that it’s okay to mess up—we all do—but just like Peter we should pick ourselves up and keep moving forward. Peter ended up being an amazing disciple who later gave his life for Jesus and His mission!

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Think about what role you would like to play in Jesus' mission to save the people of planet earth. Have a discussion with your youth leader, Pathfinder leaders, parents or pastor about the various roles young people can play in the church today. Identify at least one way you would like to experiment to find out what talents God has given you for His cause. These ways may include but are not limited to: junior deacon/deaconess, help teach Sabbath School, read Scripture or have special music or children's story for church, help with a humanitarian outreach project (hopefully you are already done this as a part of previous outreach ideas in this guide), or maybe become a TLT in your Pathfinder club.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Spend some time praying about this chapter's application and what new role you may be able to play at church. Ask Jesus to help you to hear His voice and calling clearly.

Matthew Chapter 17

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever witnessed supernatural activity of any kind? Describe what happened in as much detail as you can remember.

- b. What is your favorite miracle story in the Bible? Tell the story in your own words or read it out loud. Why is this your favorite?

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

So far in the book of Matthew, Jesus' disciples have seen lots of miracles. There are miracles of healing and feeding people and raising people from the dead and calming storms and casting out demons, etc. Even when Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus in this chapter Peter, James and John were excited and wanted to build some little shelters for them. What is interesting is that when God spoke, these same disciples were suddenly terrified and Jesus had to tell them not to be afraid and He also told them not to tell anyone what they had seen until He was raised from the dead? Why do you think that is?

Do you think you would be terrified if you heard God's voice today? Why/why not? Can you think of another time when God's voice was heard in Bible times and people were afraid? Can you think of a time in the Bible where someone heard God's voice and was not afraid? What do you think makes the difference?

(Hint: see Exodus 20:18-20 for one example)

Do you think Peter, James and John ever forgot this experience? Why/why not?

What is your most memorable experience of seeing or hearing God in action? Was it scary or comforting or something else? Explain.

What do you think is the best way to put yourself in a position to see and hear God's miracle working power?

Do you think you would be more likely to see God's power on a mission trip or sitting at home watching TV? Explain.

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one or two:

- a. Think of the times in your life when you have seen God's power and noticed His activity around you? What else was going on in your life at that time? How involved were you with church and how was your devotional life?

- b. Think of the times in your life when you did not see God's power and activity around you for a while. What else was going on in your life at that time? How involved were you with church and how was your devotional life? Do you think there is a connection or relationship between how your spiritual life is going and weather or not you see God working in and around you? Explain.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

It is normal to have ups and downs in your spiritual life but we obviously want more up times than down. Pray and ask Jesus to help you draw close to Him now, at this time, and ask Him to help you to be close to Him and to see and feel Him in and around you working in this world.

Matthew Chapter 18

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have your parents ever told you to, “stop acting like a child!” Or, “Stop being childish”? What does it mean when someone says that? What were you doing when it was said to you?

- b. Why do some adults smile when they talk about a child that is very mature for their age? Why do you think some adults want kids to grow up quickly?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter Jesus talks a lot about how we should all become like little children and He also talks a lot about protecting children and being humble like them. What do you think Jesus means by all the references to little children?

Do you think Jesus is being overprotective of children? Why/why not?

What do you think is the difference between being child-like and being childish?

In this chapter Jesus also teaches on forgiveness. Here Jesus tells a parable about someone who was forgiven a great deal who then in turn refused to forgive some who owed him a relatively small amount. Why do you think this is such a terrible thing to do?

Do you know of many children that hold grudges or is that something that people learn as they grow up? Explain.

Does being forgiving have anything to do with being childlike? Explain?

Do you know of many children that hold grudges or is that something that people learn as they grow up? Explain.

What do you think is the ideal level of maturity to reach?

Is it better to be more flexible and open to new ideas and risk making mistakes or is it better to just go with what has worked for you in the past because you have always been able to trust it? Explain.

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Think of the times in your life when you have seen God's power and noticed His activity around you? Take a look at your life and try to determine how open you are to change and new things. Do you think you would be open to the Holy Spirit leading you in a direction you and your parents have never gone before or do you prefer to go with what is familiar to your friends and family? If you felt completely convicted that you felt God calling you to be a missionary to a foreign land how hard would it be for you to drop everything here in America and go?

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask Jesus to help you to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Ask Him to help you to be open to whatever He sees best for you to do in this life. Ask Him to take away your fears and prejudices and to help you to be free to follow the Spirit wherever He may go.

5. Outreach Idea

Go to the Adventist Frontier Missions website (<http://www.afmonline.org/missionaries/>) and choose a missionary to read about and follow. Also browse the People of Peru website (<http://www.peopleofperu.org>) and read about volunteers like yourself that have gone on short-term mission trips. Choose a missionary to write and possibly send a care package to. Inquire about adopting a child to support on one of these websites or on the <http://restoreachild.org> site.

Matthew Chapter 19

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Talk about what it takes to get good grades in school. Be specific and give all the details you can think of.
- b. Talk about what it takes to get bad grades in school. Be specific and give all the details you can think of.

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter someone asks Jesus what it takes to have eternal life. Jesus told Him to keep the commandments and then when the man asked what else he needed to do to be perfect Jesus told him to go and sell all his possessions, give his money to the poor and follow Him. This answer made the man turn and walk away. Would you walk away from Christianity if you had to sell everything you own and give all your money to the poor? Why/why not? Do you think it's different today? Why/why not?

Is being a good Christian similar in any way to being a good student in school? Explain.

Is there a difference between being a good Christian and trying to be a “perfect” Christian? Can we all choose what level of Christian we want to be or does everyone need to try and be perfect? Explain.

☐ 3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Think through your life and actions and try to decide how important Christianity is to you. Are you just trying to get by with as little commitment as possible or are you completely sold out to Jesus and committed to spreading the gospel? Do you feel convicted that Jesus wants a greater commitment from you or do you think you are committed enough? If Jesus asked you to give up all of your possessions and go be a missionary do you think you could do it?

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask Jesus what more He would like from you? Ask Him how you could be closer to Him and how you could spend more time together. Ask Him to open the doors before you to lead you into the Christian life He wants for you.

Try to talk to Jesus and check in with Him every hour or so for the next week and see if His voice and leading becomes clearer to you.

Matthew Chapter 20

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever heard kids saying, “No fair!” Why do kids say that? Have you ever said something like that? Do you think life should be fair? Why/why not?

- b. Is there anything the average person can do to make life more fair for everyone? Explain.

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The former 6th grade teacher at my kid’s school was famous for always saying, “life isn’t fair, get over it!” In this passage Jesus talks about how God is unfair in some ways. To do this Jesus tells the parable of the vineyard workers. In this parable the people who worked only an hour at the end of the day received just as much pay as the people who worked all day long. What do you think is the point Jesus is trying to make?

Do you think this is why some people say they will live life as they please and try things they know are wrong but sound fun, and then give their lives to God when they are older? What do you think is wrong with this type of logic?

Do you think the world is really more fun than following God? Explain.

What would you say to a friend that is deciding to get involved in things that you both know are not right? How would you try and convince them that following Jesus is better?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Have a discussion with some friends and your youth leaders and/or Pathfinder leaders and put together some ideas for telling others why living for God for your entire life is the best and most meaningful way to live. Make notes or write it out word for word and memorize it so that you will be prepared to share these thoughts with others when you have opportunity. Be careful not to be preachy! Be loving, practical and convincing.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Spend some time praying for friends and others you know who are not following Jesus right now. Pray that the things of the world will not be satisfying and pray for the Holy Spirit to convict these people of God's love and care for them. Then help answer your own prayers by reaching out and being loving and kind to these people rather than being judgmental.

Matthew Chapter 21

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever known someone who liked to make a grand entrance and get lots of attention wherever they went? Describe one such entrance.

- b. Have you ever thrown or seen someone else throw a temper tantrum where they yelled and screamed and knocked things over? Describe one such instance.

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter Jesus makes His triumphant entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, then after arriving in town He goes to the temple knocking over all the tables and chairs and driving out the money changers and then He left to spend the night in Bethany. Why do you think His stay in Jerusalem was so short after such a grand entrance and big display at the temple?

What is the difference between Jesus' grand entrance and one that might be made by a movie star or celebrity of some kind?

What is the difference between Jesus destroying the temple courtyard and a little kid throwing a temper tantrum?

Why do you think Jesus was so violent? Do you think He could have made His point a bit more politely? Why/why not?

Do you think this is the first time Jesus has seen money-changers in the temple? Why do you think He had tolerated them before but not now?

Do you see any types of corruption in your church today that would be similar to the corruption that Jesus saw in the church of His day? Explain?

What do you think you should do about it?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Think through the positive and negative aspects of church life today. While we live in a sinful world there will obviously be problems in our churches. What do you think you should do when you see problems in your church or in another organization you are involved with? Have a discussion with your youth group and leaders about how to know when you should be forgiving and accepting versus when to stand up and make a big deal about things that are not right.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and ask Jesus to help you know how to be a person that makes a positive difference in your church, school and family and not someone that causes unnecessary trouble. Think through the situations you are involved in and pray about your role in those situations and what you can do to help.
- b. Pray for those that tend to stir up trouble and controversy in your area. Pray that they will find peace, love and acceptance from Jesus and learn to be less hostile towards others.

Matthew Chapter 22

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

- a. What is the most fun you've ever had at a party? Who all was there? What did you do? What do you think made it so much fun?

- b. What do you think are some of the best ways to show love to other people? List at least 10.

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter Jesus tells the parable of the great feast and He also talks about how the “Most Important Commandment” is to love one another. In the parable all the original guests—whom the king and his son must have know well—refused to come to the wedding feast. They were shown love and respect in the form of the invitation but they rudely turned away—and some even killed the messengers with the invitations. Then love and respect was shown to total strangers by being invited—most of whom showed up properly dressed and behaving themselves well—showing appreciation.

Why do you think the “friends” turned away and the strangers were grateful? Do you think this may be an illustration of the Jews rejecting Jesus and the tax collectors, prostitutes and sinners accepting Him? Why/why not?

Why do you think the Pharisees started plotting how to arrest Jesus after He told this parable? Do you think this is the perfect illustration of what Jesus may have been trying to say? Why/why not?

How do you think the religious leaders had gotten to such a low point in Jesus' day that they would be so devious, cruel and unloving? Explain.

How does a person get to that point today? Explain.

What would you imagine the home life for these corrupt leaders must be like? Do you think there is any love in their lives at all or do their actions show a total lack of love in their experience? Explain.

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Think about all the relationships you have with others—both good and bad. Are you better at affirming the good relationships or trying to improve the bad ones? Why do you think that is? Try to think of ways that you can do both—show gratitude to those that love you (rather than taking it for granted), and show love to those that you find difficult to deal with in an effort to build better relationships.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and thank God for all the people in your life that show you love (by name—make a list if you like). Pray for God's blessing and love to be seen and felt in their lives.
- b. Pray for "your enemies" as the Bible instructs. Ask for Jesus to help you turn your "enemies" into friends. Pray for God's blessing and love to be seen and felt in their lives as well.

5. Outreach Idea

Make plans to do or say something nice for all the people who play a significant role in your life—weather it is positive or negative—try to be impartial. Perhaps you could write a note and attach it to a small gift for each one to find anonymously.

Matthew Chapter 23

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever been the victim of relentless false accusation, lies or some other kind of torment? How did it feel to be mischaracterized and lied about? What did you do about the situation? Explain.

- b. Have you ever been warned about someone who was supposedly a bad person and then found out that they were actually nothing like what you were told? How did it make you feel to know that you evaluated that person's character for yourself rather than just believing rumors? Explain.

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Yikes! This chapter is one long rant against the Pharisees and their arrogance and greed and then at the end Jesus seems distressed over how all of Jerusalem and its people have come to such a place of apostasy. He obviously knew that in just a little while the leaders of the people would call for His execution as the crowds would be chanting, "crucify Him!" Do you think this may have been part of what was on Jesus' mind at this time? Why/why not?

Do you think that Jesus may have also been getting a little frustrated because He knew His time was short and so many of the people were still not understanding or caring about what He had to say? Why/why not?

Do you ever wish you could see the future as Jesus could? Why/why not? Do you think it would be exciting or depressing?

How would you feel if you knew you were about to be killed by the people you had been sent to save?

Would there be any consolation in the fact that you would be seeing your Father again soon and enjoying the comforts of heaven? Do you think that even crossed Jesus mind? Why/why not?

Is it hard for you to see the good things that you know are coming in your life when you are in the midst of chaos and trouble? Explain.

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Sit down and try to imagine in detail what heaven will be like. Write an essay, draw a picture or do whatever it takes to imagine a perfect world where there will only be happiness and love. Discuss this future world with others and share ideas of what it may be like. Try to think of ways that you can remind yourself of your future life with Jesus every day.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask Jesus to remind you of the goal of reaching heaven every day. Pray over Hebrews 12:1-3 every day for the next couple of weeks until you have it memorized

Matthew Chapter 24

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. How does it make you feel to know that one day this world will be destroyed? How does it make you feel to know that God plans to cleanse this planet with fire?

- b. How does it make you feel to know that one day Jesus will re-create this world and make it more amazing than ever? Are you making plans to be there to watch Jesus re-create everything from the New Jerusalem after it lands on this planet? Why/why not?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter Jesus' disciples inquire about the end of the world and the signs of His second coming. Jesus goes on to paint a rather scary scenario of wars and destruction. Do you think this scared the disciples or helped them to feel confident because they knew what to expect? Explain.

How does it make you feel to know that all these troubles are coming? Explain.

Do you ever worry about the persecution to come and what you may have to endure? How comforting is it to know that Jesus will be with you through His Holy Spirit?

Do you know of any people that are fascinated with end-time scenarios and it seems like they only go to church when these events are happening and they they quit going when things get peaceful again? Should we base our relationship with Jesus and church attendance on the current events happening in our world or on something else? Explain.

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Think through your relationship with Jesus. Do you tend to spend more time with Him when you are scared and lonely or when things are going well and you have lots of friends and things to do? Why do you think that is? Would you like to change the way it is? Why/why not.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and thank Jesus for always being there for you no matter how busy He is or how many prayers He has to answer or world situations to deal with. Ask Him to help you to be as faithful and committed to your relationship as He is.

Matthew Chapter 25

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. What kind of person are you? Outgoing, introverted, athletic, intellectual, girly girl, Tom-boy, He-man or what? Ask your friends and youth leaders to describe how they see you in a positive way.

- b. Talk about your goals in life. What you want to accomplish in high school: sports and recreational activities you want to pursue, academic goals and other dreams. Then talk about what profession you want to pursue when you are an adult. Talk about why these things interest you.

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter Jesus continues the end-time scenarios, but now through parables. The main points are: are you prepared to meet Jesus or just living your life, are you using the talents God gave you to help others learn about Him, and the judgment is real and it's coming. Read Revelation 14:6-12 and see how many similarities you can find. Does it ever seem like the Bible says a lot of the same things over and over but in different ways? Matthew 24, Matthew 25, and Revelation 14 all seem to have a similar end-time theme don't they? Can you think of any other prophecies, teachings and narratives that also have this theme?

Why do you think the Bible approaches the same topic from so many angles? Do you think that Jesus is intentionally trying to reach every person from every background with all kinds of different mindsets and personalities and possible? Why/why not?

Of the 3 end-time passages listed here which one makes the most sense to you? Why? Which one is the most difficult for you to understand? Why do you think that is?

Do you think it is important for every person to understand every end-time scenario passage in the Bible or should we each focus mainly on the ones that make the most sense to us? Why/why not?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Think through your favorite passages of scripture and try to determine which books of the Bible speak to you the most clearly. Ask your friends, youth leaders, parents and pastor to help you try and determine where you would be most likely to spend more time in scripture based on your interests, temperament and personality type. Plan to spend more time in these parts of the Bible without neglecting the rest of scripture.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask Jesus to help you find a deeper interest in His word. Ask Him to help you understand more deeply and to learn to apply the lessons of the Bible to your life just like these Application Guides have attempted to help you to do.

Matthew Chapter 26

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Are you a tightwad, a spendthrift or are you somewhere in between? Why do you think that is? Do you wish you handled your money and other resources differently than you do? Explain.

- b. Have you ever been betrayed by a friend or acquaintance? How did it make you feel? Is there anything you can do to keep yourself from ever being betrayed again? Why/why not?

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

This chapter revolves around Jesus betrayal and arrest. It is interesting to note that Jesus has coolly anticipated it all. He has been telling His disciples it was coming for some time. At the last supper He predicted Peter's betrayal before it happened and then in the garden when approached by a mob of armed gangsters Peter tries to start a battle by chopping a guy's ear off to which Jesus responded by healing the ear and by stating that those very events were fulfilling prophecy. Jesus completely calmed and controlled the circumstances around His own arrest. He could have called thousands of angels or disappeared but deliberately chose not to.

What role do you think Jesus' agonizing prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane played in preparing Him to be so cool and in control during the actual event?

Do you think Jesus was just putting on a cool exterior or do you think He really had a deep peace as He went through this time? Explain how that would be possible.

Do you think it's possible for you to experience the same peace during difficult times that Jesus did? Why/why not?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Think about one of the most difficult times you have personally been through. Discuss the details of what happened with your group. Do you think that a deeper closer relationship with Jesus/God/Holy Spirit could have been helpful? Why/why not? Discuss ways that you can implement that deeper/closer relationship with Jesus and how it may help you the next time you face a difficult situation.

Talk about the role that baptism plays in your relationship with Jesus. If you haven't been baptized yet talk to your parents, youth leaders and parents about what baptism means and talk about weather you'd like to study for baptism.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask Jesus to help you learn what it means to pray without ceasing. Pray and ask Jesus to send you the Holy Spirit in a powerful way.

5. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Ask your pastor about starting a prayer ministry at your church where you can take prayer requests and pray for people in difficult/stressful situations on a regular basis. Try putting a box for anonymous requests somewhere in your church and make announcements from the front as well. Be sure to assemble a team that will pray faithfully for the requests and make it a part of your Sabbath School and Pathfinder club meetings if possible as well.

Matthew Chapter 27

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Do you have an overactive imagination? Why do you think you do/don't? Describe one of your most overly imagined scenarios to your friends/leaders. After hearing your scenario do those listening agree that you do/don't have an overactive imagination? Why/why not.

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

In this chapter Jesus suffers and dies. He is a very healthy young man who is educated and well respected by many and yet He dies. This obviously had to take some extreme circumstances. We tend to become calloused to fact of Jesus' death because we hear and talk about it so much. But have you ever thought of the reality of His death? Have you ever imagined what it would have been like to be there and see it all happen? Do you understand what death is like?

Have you ever seen an animal or any type of mammal die? In the Old Testament times hundreds of thousands of sheep were sacrificed to help people understand the consequences of sin and what death was really like.

Ellen White says that we should spend a thoughtful hour each day contemplating the life of Christ—especially the closing scenes. Spend some time doing this with your group now. Close your eyes if it helps you to focus and pray for understanding as someone from your group reads this chapter out loud. Mrs. White instructs us in this same passage to allow your imagination to grasp each scene. Ask the reader to read slowly so that you will have the time to grasp as much as possible.

Describe what it was like to listen and try to picture everything that was taking place. Was it a good or bad experience for you? Explain. Would you like to engage scripture like this more often? Why/why not?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Spend some time practicing reading scripture as we are instructed in the Spirit of Prophecy and as we have just done now using your imagination and focusing on the gospels. Here is the entire quote of how this is done properly.

“It would be well to spend a thoughtful hour each day reviewing the life of Christ from the manger to Calvary. We should take it point by point and let the imagination vividly grasp each scene, especially the closing ones of His earthly life. By thus contemplating His teachings and sufferings, and the infinite sacrifice made by Him for the redemption of the race, we may strengthen our faith, quicken our love and become more deeply imbued with the spirit which sustained our Savior” (Maranatha, p. 77).

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray for the Holy Spirit to be with you as you read scripture in this manner.

Matthew Chapter 28

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever seen and intense lightning storm? How close were you to the storm? Describe it in detail. Was it scary? Why/why not? Do you think you would ever consider being a storm chaser? Why/why not?

- b. Have you ever been in an earthquake? Was it scary to have the earth moving beneath your feet? Why/why not? Which do you think is scarier: a tornado in the Midwest or an earthquake in California? Explain. Where would you rather live if you had to choose between the two places? Why?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Resurrection! Earthquakes, angels with faces shining like lightning, and guards so afraid that they shook and fainted! Wow! Can you picture that scene? Would you like walk up on that scene like the two Marys did? Why/why not? Why do you think the angel told them to not be afraid? Would you be afraid? Why/why not?

A few verses later Matthew says the women were frightened but also filled with great joy at the same time. Have you ever felt such conflicting feelings at the same time? Explain.

Do you think the disciples were glad to see the women when they arrived? Read the resurrection story in the other 3 gospels and put all of the differing accounts together to get the full picture.

Why do you think Jesus gave the great gospel commission as His final words to His followers? Do you think this makes the gospel commission more important than Jesus' other instructions? Why/why not?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Try to think back through the entire book of Matthew. Sit down and read it through all at once so it is fresh in your mind. Do you think you could live the life of a disciple of Jesus Christ? There were some like the 11 faithful disciples that were called to drop everything and follow Jesus. There were others—like the demoniacs—that were sent back to witness in their hometown. Others stayed in their professions being honest and fair and all were witnesses for Jesus in one way or another.

Have you made your decision regarding baptism? Be sure to discuss this decision with your parents and youth leaders and pastor.

What kind of witness do you think Jesus may be calling you to be? Explain.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to fill your heart, mind and soul and to inspire you with what He would have you to do as His follower. Ask Him to open doors to the places He would have you to go and to fill you with the courage to stand up and be used by Him in miraculous ways.

5. Outreach Idea

Form a group of some friends and/or neighbors or form a group at your school and go back through this Application Guide together. Ask a friend and/or youth leader to help you lead this group.

