

A Walk Through Jesus' Life – based on Matthew's Gospel:

This is a rough draft of what I'm using with my family this year. I will work out more details as we go through it, but for now, you are welcome to use this as a template for preparing your own walk through Matthew.

If you use this, we would love to have you share some of the ideas you come up with for ornaments or activities. Or maybe you will come up with a great discussion question that really got your kids involved in an active conversation. Please share those with us as well. You can share in the blog by commenting or you can join our private Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/219484070223589>

Day

1. **Jesus' ancestry – (Matthew 1:1-17)** - see how many of the stories your children can recount

– take a few days on this section if you want to, or review the genealogies together recounting the stories taking a little time together for it today as a kick-off to Lent.

Art/craft/ornament: draw your family tree and think of/talk about relatives that have encouraged you in your life

Easter Tree Ornament: a scroll or a tree to represent genealogy

Action/application: call a relative and thank them for what they mean to you, pray with them.

Questions to Discuss: Why do you think God used people who were not Jewish to be in Jesus' family tree?

Did the failures of some of the people stop God's plan?

Why didn't God use people who were more perfect?

2. **The birth of Jesus – (Matthew 1:18-2:23)** – tell the Christmas story including the Wisemen and the escape to Egypt and eventual return to Nazareth. Think about how God protected Jesus and His family and how He provided for their needs through the Wisemen’s gifts.

Sing: “Joy to the World” and “We Three Kings” or whatever your favorite carol is.

Easter Tree Ornament: A Nativity ornament from Christmas

Action/Application: Act on something God puts on your heart to do today. Is He prompting you to pray for someone, bless someone in some way? Ask Him what He wants you to do today, and obey like Joseph obeyed—without hesitation or doubt. (Share with the family tomorrow what God led you to do today).

Questions to discuss: Luke talks about the shepherds and angels; Matthew talks more about the wisemen. What is significant about these two groups of people?

Why do you think they included them in the story while possibly not mentioning others who visited Jesus?

3. **John the Baptist and Jesus’ Baptism – (Matthew 3:1-17)** – Read the story and explain baptism and why we must be baptized. We always share that it is an outward testimony of an inward change in our lives. It is a picture of us dying to ourselves and choosing to follow Christ all our lives. Be ready to answer any questions your children may have.

Easter Tree Ornament: A shell or a water ornament of some sort

Action/Application: Have you all been baptized? Share what it meant to you. If you have pictures of your baptisms, share those and remember the days. If someone has not yet been baptized but has become a believer, consider talking to your pastor about being baptized soon.

Questions to discuss: Why does Jesus want us to be baptized?

4. **Jesus' Temptation in the Wilderness – (Matthew 4:1-11)** – When Jesus was tempted in the desert, He was tempted in the same ways He would be tempted at the cross. Physical discomfort: turn the rocks into bread; relief from hunger and thirst and pain on the cross. Becoming King: Satan offered Jesus an earthly Kingdom; when Jesus was in Jerusalem, they wanted to make Him their earthly King. Angels rescue Him: if He fell or jumped off the building the angels would save him; if he asked, the angels would take him off the cross.

Easter Tree Ornament: A stone

Action/Application: Memorize 1 Corinthians 10:13

Questions to discuss: What are ways we can run away from temptation?

Why is it hard to run away from temptation? Why is it a temptation to begin with?

5. **Jesus begins His ministry – (Matthew 4:12-25) – Vs. 17 is the Gospel and a sermon in one verse.**

Easter Tree Ornament: sandal

Activity: With little kids, play follow the leader.

Questions: What does it mean to follow Jesus? Do we get to pick and choose whether to obey or not? Why/why not?

6. **The Beatitudes – (Matthew 5:1-12)** – This is a picture of the Gospel and living the Christian life.

Easter Tree Ornament: the word “blessed” or a mountain

Discussion Questions: How are we blessed in each of these descriptions? What is the blessing? What does it mean to be blessed?

Action/Application: Create a visual of the beatitudes – a paper chain, a chart. End by praying for those who are persecuted and for those who persecute Christians or for someone who is giving your family a hard time for your faith.

7. Salt and Light – (Matthew 5:13-16)

Easter Tree Ornament: small saltshaker or salt packet and a tealight candle

Discussion Questions: How can we be salt and light? What does salt do? What does light do? How does that describe a Christian?

Action/Application: How can you share the Good News about Jesus with someone this week? What would you say?

8. Teaching about the Commandments – (Matthew 5:17-42, Exodus 20:1-17)

Easter Tree Ornament: miniature stone tablets

Discussion Questions: Your friend has a new game you've wanted forever! How do you feel? What feelings and attitude would honor God and obey the commandments?

Your mom won't let you watch your favorite show because you didn't finish washing the dishes. You go and do them, but the whole time you are muttering under your breath, imagining the argument you wish you could have with her. Which commandment have you broken and how?

9. Love Your Enemies – (Matthew 5:43-48)

10. How to Pray – (Matthew 6:1-18)

11. Teaching about Money and God's Provision – (Matthew 6:19-34)

12. Teaching about the Christian Life – (Matthew 7:1-29)

13. Jesus Heals – (Matthew 8:1-9:8)

14. Jesus Calls Matthew – (Matthew 9:9-13) – Seeing others as Jesus sees them

15. Pray for Workers – (Matthew 9:35-38) – Spend time praying for your city, your church, and for God to send workers out into the harvest.

16. Jesus Sends Out the Twelve – (Matthew 10:1-42)

17. Jesus Is God's Chosen Servant - (Matthew 12:15-21)

18. Sign of Jonah – (Matthew 12:38-41)
19. Parable of the Farmer Scattering Seed – (Matthew 13:1-23)
20. Parable of the Wheat and Weeds - (Matthew 13:24-30)
21. Mustard Seed – (Matthew 13:31-32)
22. Yeast – (Matthew 13:33-35)
23. Parable of the Hidden Treasure and Pearl
24. Fishing Net – (Matthew 13:44-52)
25. Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand – (Matthew 14:13-21)
26. Jesus Walks on Water – (Matthew 14:22-36)
27. Heart Condition – (Matthew 15:1-20)
28. Faith of the Gentile Woman – (Matthew 15:21-28)
29. Jesus Heals Many People – (Matthew 15:29-31)
30. Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand – (Matthew 15:32-39)
31. Wanting Miracles -
32. Believing False Teaching - (Matthew 16:1-12)
33. Who Do You Say I Am – (Matthew 16:13-28)
34. The Transfiguration – (Matthew 17:1-13)
35. Parable of the Lost Sheep - (Matthew 18:12-14)
36. Parable of the Unforgiving Debtor – (Matthew 18:21-35)
37. The Little Children – (Matthew 19:10-15)
38. The Story of the Rich Man - (Matthew 19:16-30)
39. Parable of the Vineyard – (Matthew 20:1-16, John 15:1-17)
40. The Triumphal Entry/Palm Sunday – (Matthew 21:1-11)

41. Jesus Clears the Temple and Three Parables, Greatest Commandment – (Matthew 21:12-22:14, 34-40))

42. The Plot to Kill Jesus, Jesus at Bethany – (Matthew 26:1-16)

43. Silence – (Psalm 46:10, Matt. 11:28-30)

44. The Last Supper, Jesus Prays, Is Betrayed, and His Trial – (Matthew 26:17-75)

45. The Crucifixion and Burial of Jesus – (Matthew 27:32-66)

46. A Time of Silent Prayer – The only discussion will be if children have questions

47. Resurrection Sunday – (Matthew 28:1-20) – Resurrection and the Great Commission