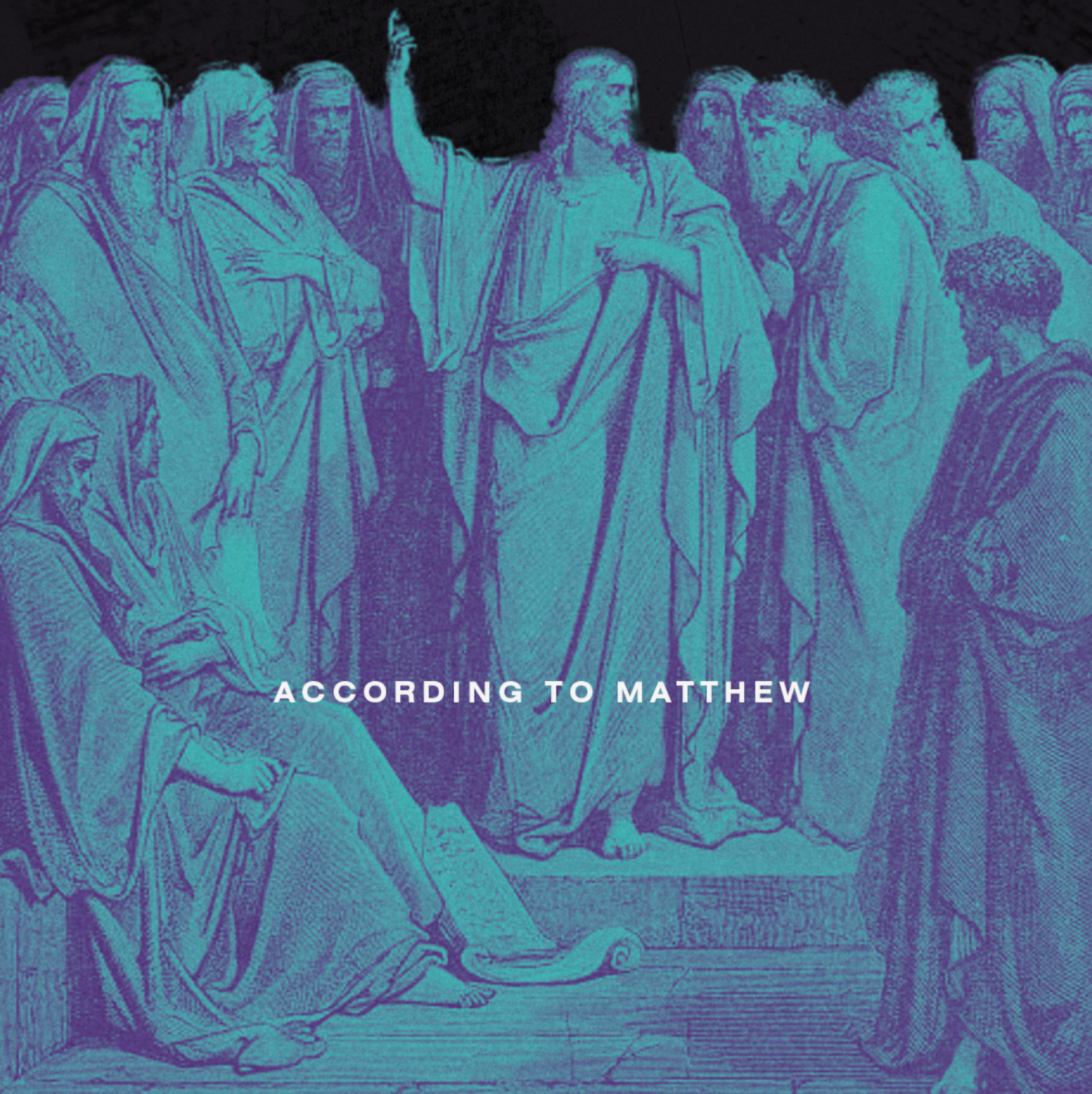


The Gospel



ACCORDING TO MATTHEW



WEEK 1
JESUS IS



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

There are four crucial components for a group to maintain its health: Word, prayer, relationships, and reaching out. In this guide, you will study the biblical passage in three steps: observation, interpretation, and application. As the group leader, you are free to use any part of this guide that can assist you in achieving this goal. Remember that these group guides are designed to work in conjunction with our Matthew reading plan, so encourage your group to get a bookmark from church. Today we explore the idea of **Who Jesus is.**

CONNECT

- What are some common opinions on Jesus' identity from outside the Christian faith that you heard?
- Are there ways that you think you might operate with a wrong view of Jesus? How?
- What problems might result from a faulty view of who Jesus is? Can you think of any examples of this playing out?

INTRODUCTION

The genealogy of Jesus as listed in the first chapter of Matthew is pivotal for an understanding of who Jesus is in his human nature. He is descended of real people who really lived—patriarchs, kings, and sinners. The nativity from the same chapter is pivotal for knowing who Jesus is in his divine nature—that he is the sinless Son of God, incarnate of the Holy Spirit, born to a virgin in fulfillment of the Scriptures. These two true origins of the Godman beget different responses from everyone who begins to hear testimony of his birth. This week we explore Christ's identity, the implications thereof, and the responses recorded in Scripture.

OBSERVATIONS & INTERPRETATION

Read: Matthew 1:1-17 (cf. v. 21)

Discuss: There is deep significance in the names ascribed to Jesus in v. 1. He is named Jesus, he is the Christ, the son of David, and the son of Abraham. Spend some time exploring the implications of these names with regard to his work, his calling, his lineage, and this ethnicity (eg. Savior, Messiah, King, and Jew).

OBSERVATIONS & INTERPRETATION

Read: Matthew 1:18-25

Discuss: Jesus' nativity story displays his divine origin as God's only begotten Son. This is tied closely in the text what he accomplishes specifically as Savior. How do you think these two truths relate to one another? Why does our Savior from sin and Hell need to be God himself?

OBSERVATIONS & INTERPRETATION

Read: Matthew 2:1-12, 16-18

Discuss: Among the responses to Jesus' birth here in Matthew's account we can observe the actions of Mary, Joseph, the magi, and king Herod. Who received him? Who rejected him? Who was called to embrace faith and obedience? Why do you think each responded in the manner that they did?

APPLICATION

- Discuss how we benefit from how he was tempted in every way that we are, he suffered as we do, and he modeled for us what it means to be fully human.
- Discuss how these implications add to the audacity of his death in our place to save us from our sins.
- Who Jesus is demands from each of us a response. Discuss how you have responded to the truth of Christ at various points in your life or your faith.

PRAYER

- Pray that our understanding of who Jesus is will shape our day-to-day walk of faith as well as the Gospel that we proclaim as we share the gift of Christ with the world around us.



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