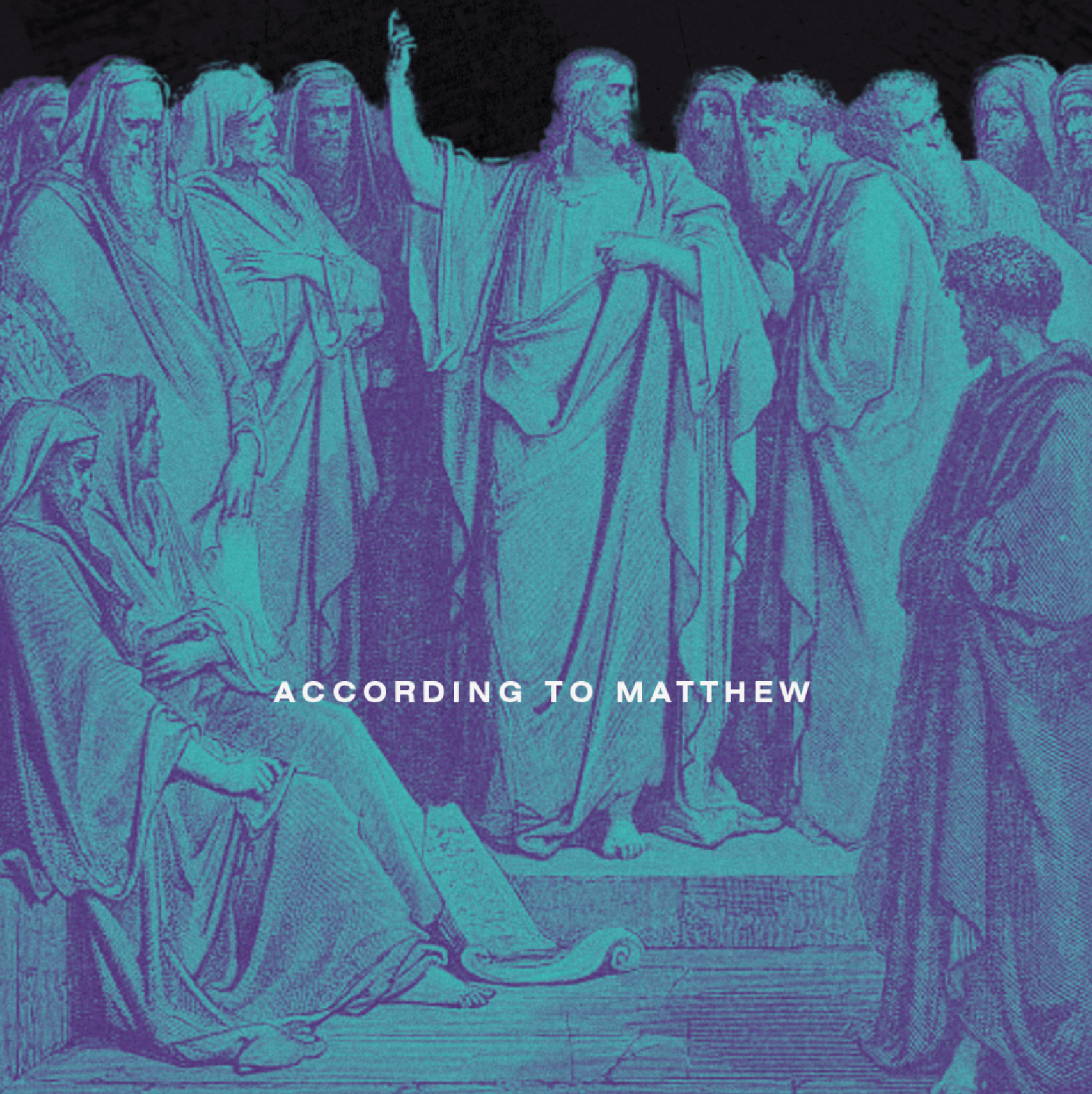


The Gospel



ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

WEEK 7
PETER'S CONFESSION



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.

CONNECT

- What fall activities or experiences are you enjoying lately?
- In today's passage we'll see that people had different views of who Jesus was. What are some popular views in your circles of who Jesus is?
- If someone asked you point blank who Jesus is, what would you say?

INTRODUCTION

Peter's response to Jesus' question in Matthew 16 is a pivot point for the entire book. It's after this confession that Jesus and the disciples begin the southward journey to Jerusalem. It's after this confession that Jesus tells them about his coming murder and resurrection. It's also after this confession that Jesus tells them to take up their own cross in order to follow him. This leads us to a point that might sound like an exaggeration but isn't: What you say about Jesus is the most important thing you'll ever say. Let's see why.

OBSERVATIONS & INTERPRETATION

Read: Matthew 16:13–20

Discuss: What stands out to you from this passage? What are the implications of that idea?

Read: Matthew 16:21–23

Discuss: There's a gap that Jesus points out between Peter's confession and his thoughts, which are set on "the things of man." What do you think Jesus means by "the things of man"?

Read: Matthew 16:24–28

Discuss: Unpack what Jesus means in verses 25 and 26.

APPLICATION

- How do Jesus' words about building his church impact or change the way you think about the church?
- Denying yourself means rejecting self-reliance and walking by faith. In what area of your life right now is Jesus calling you to do this?
- How does Jesus being the Christ, the Son of the living God, give you the desire and power to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow him?

PRAYER

- Spend time declaring Jesus' identity as expressed by Peter.
- Ask that God would align our minds with the things of God and not man.
- Ask God for his empowering grace to take up to deny yourself, take up your cross, and following Jesus.

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