

## Gospel Life Communities Study Guide

### Matthew (chapter and verses)

(Title)

Welcome back to another season of GLC's! Between now and Easter, we will be working through Matthew chapters 13-16. This section is full of parables, miracles, and more. It should be a great time for our groups.

Here's a short summary of the purpose of the book of Matthew, according to the ESV Study Bible:

*Matthew crafted his account to demonstrate Jesus' messianic identity, his inheritance of the Davidic kingship over Israel, and his fulfillment of the promise made to his ancestor Abraham (Matt. 1:1) to be a blessing to all the nations (Gen. 12:1-3). Thus in large part Matthew's Gospel is an evangelistic tool aimed at his fellow Jews, persuading them to recognize Jesus as their long-awaited Messiah. At the same time, the Gospel reveals clearly to Gentiles that salvation through Jesus the Messiah is available to all nations. For Jewish Christians, Matthew's Gospel provides encouragement to stand steadfast amid opposition from their own countrymen, as well as Gentile pagans, secure in the knowledge of their citizenship in God's kingdom.*

Our weekly studies will have four parts, following the four categories that we've set for GLC's, and end with prayer.

#### exploring

we will explore God's word together, looking at the actual words of the passage each week.

#### digging

we will dig deeper into the word, discussing the context and meaning of the passage.

#### growing

we will discuss how the passage is applied to our own lives.

#### going

we will discuss how the passage informs, challenges, and encourages our gospel witness.



## exploring

Matthew 13:31-35

31 He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. 32 It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

33 He told them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.”

34 All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable. 35 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet:

“I will open my mouth in parables;  
I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.”

1. How does Jesus describe the mustard seed? How does Jesus describe the mustard plant?
2. Who are these two parables spoken to?

## digging

3. In the larger context of Matthew 13, what did Jesus say earlier about speaking in parables?
4. Read Psalm 78:1-4. This is what Matthew quotes in v.35. Discuss.

## growing

Options:

- Watch the video “Hearing His Voice: A Short Story” found at: <https://radical.net/article/the-power-of-gods-word-among-the-unreached/>  
And discuss what you watch.
- Or if you don’t have the ability to watch the video together as a group, discuss the following questions.



5. Jesus compares the kingdom to the drastic change from a tiny mustard seed to a huge plant. In other words, the Kingdom begins insignificantly, so small it will be missed by many. However, it will also grow to be huge. How has this happened over the past 2000 years? What are examples of God's Kingdom growing in history? Discuss.
6. Now imagine the leaven. Leaven spreads throughout a batch of dough and affects it all, changing its consistency. Often in the Bible, leaven is used as a metaphor for evil, but not here. Here, Jesus uses it as a metaphor for the spread of the kingdom. How has God's Kingdom spread and affected the world? Discuss.
7. God's kingdom doesn't just spread and affect the world, it affects us and changes us personally as well. Is someone willing to share how God has entered and changed his or her own life?

### going

8. If the Holy Spirit can cause individuals, families, and entire people groups to transform because of the Gospel, is there hope for change in our community? How are we as a church involved in the spread of the Kingdom, and what are some ways that we could be more involved?

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### ***Pray "Kingdom Prayers"***

Kingdom prayers are prayers that don't only focus on the immediate need, but also on God's glory. For example, if someone has a sore knee instead of just praying "God, please heal Betty's knee", you would pray something like "God, please heal Betty's knee so that she can continue to serve you and your people; so that she can continue attend worship services pain free and give you glory for your healing hand." See the difference?

Some ideas of what to pray for:

- Each other's needs/requests
- King Road's ministries, missionaries, members, and pastors
- Opportunities to share the gospel

