

Small Group Study
Matthew 3
June 26, 2022

A suggested format for your group time

10-15 min – Fellowship

10-15 min – Prayer (using the four quadrants of the SG prayer sheet)

40 min – Study (see below)

This study is designed to introduce your small group to the story of Jesus through the Jewish perspective of one of the original disciples named Matthew. Your group will see the clear connection between Old Testament prophecies and their fulfillment in the person of Jesus as the Messianic son of David, the Prophet greater than Moses, and the seed of Abraham that blesses all the nations!

Chapter Summary

John the Baptist prepares the way for the arrival of the Messiah by calling the nation of Israel to repent of sin and to show evidence of that repentance. While John baptized with water, he declared the Messiah would baptize with the fire of the Holy Spirit. He baptizes Jesus in the Jordan River and God voices His divine pleasure and affirmation.

Jumpstart Questions

- If a person tells you they are sorry for something they said or did, how would you know they were truly sorry?
- Why is genuine repentance necessary for the restoration of a broken or wounded relationship?

Matthew 3:1-6

- Why was there a sense of urgency in John's message of repentance? Why is it vital that we respond quickly to God's Word to us today?
- In what way did John consider himself the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy? In what way is our ministries similar to that of John the Baptist?

Matthew 3:7-12

- How do you think the religious leaders responded to John calling for them to repent? What is meant by the phrase, “show fruit for repentance?”
- What happens to the tree that fails to produce fruit? What happens to the person who refuses to repent and does not produce the fruit of repentance?

Matthew 3:13-16

- Why was John hesitant to baptize Jesus? Why was Jesus insistent that John baptize Him?
- What two divine manifestations occurred when Jesus came out of the water? Why do you think the Holy Spirit came in the form of a dove?
- In what way did the Son please the Father? In what ways can we please our heavenly Father?

Practical suggestions:

1. Please feel free to modify any question and include other questions that you might find helpful for your group - specifically questions that lead participants to make comments *based on the text* (not just to give opinions).
2. Invite members to make other observations they see *in the passage*. Have them to identify the specific verse where that observation is made.
3. Ask what application can be made out of these verses that will help a person to put into practice the truths in the passage?
4. Ask for volunteers to read the various sections. **Don't ask specific people to read unless you know they are comfortable doing so.*
5. Be intentional about including everyone into the conversation. Asking an 'open' question directed to a specific person who remains fairly quiet is one simple way of inclusion (in other words, a question that may not have a specific right or wrong answer). An example of an 'open' question is: *What's your favorite part of this passage? Why?*
6. Remain sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and make both ministry and teaching a priority of your group time together.