



REVIEW

WATCH https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctiY9cGr_Tk&feature=youtu.be

READ Matthew 24:1-51

ASK:

- Spend some time on the parables about how we are to be ready for Christ's return.
- **How are you being a faithful servant as you await to return of Jesus our true King?**
- **What areas of your life might need to change as you wait?**
- **Where in your life have you seen progress in faithfully trusting Christ in all of life over the last year?**

PREVIEW Next week is Mothers Day. We won't necessarily be in Ruth, but it's a great story to read leading into this weekend.

READ

Read a portion the story of Ruth out loud (all but one person should keep their Bibles closed for now). **Read slowly. Read as if for the first time.**

ASK

- **What does it say?** (In a word, in a phrase)
- **What do you see?** (picture the scene, the people. What stands out?)
- **What happens next?** Guess! (say, "I wonder...")
- **What do you hear?** (What word comes to mind after reading? Spend some time in silent prayer before answering. *Why do you think God included this here in the Story?*)
- **What do you want to do?** (as a result of what Jesus has done).

PRAYING TOGETHER FOR THE VULNERABLE

"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." –Micah 6:8

As a church, we want to be intentional about acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God. As a first step, The Protect Team will provide monthly prayer guides based on Psalm 147.

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| 7 He upholds the cause of the oppressed (Nov) | the Lord loves the righteous. (Apr) |
| and gives food to the hungry. (Dec) | 9 The Lord watches over the foreigner (May) |
| The Lord sets prisoners free, (Jan) | and sustains the fatherless |
| 8 the Lord gives sight to the blind, (Feb) | and the widow, (June) |
| the Lord lifts up | but he frustrates |
| those who are bowed down, (Mar) | the ways of the wicked. (July) |

"...and sustains the fatherless and the widow" Psalm 147:9 (May)

THINK

"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God." John 1:12-13 and "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." John 14:18

Discuss: How can we relate to the fatherless? How does God respond to us as fatherless children?

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." James 1:27

Discuss: *Why does God consider looking after the orphans and widows in their distress pure and faultless? What attitudes and parts of culture can we find in the world that might 'pollute' our thinking about caring for the orphans and widows?*

"For in You the fatherless find compassion." Hosea 14:3

Discuss: *How does God respond to the fatherless? How can I demonstrate compassion toward the fatherless and the widow?*

PRAY

- Adore: Thank God for the way he has welcomed us into his adoptive family. Thank him that he is trustworthy to provide compassion and care for the fatherless and the widow.
- Confess: We confess our thoughtlessness and apathy at times for these people groups.
- Ask: Ask the Lord to break our hearts for the fatherless and the widow, and show us specific ways we can be involved with caring for them.

DO

- Visit <https://www.mare.org/> and pray for the children who are waiting for a Forever Family.
- Join **Every Single One**, and provide prayer/birthday/Christmas gifts for children waiting for forever families. Contact Gabriella Nabozny at gnabo@lasadoption.org or (248) 663-8133
- Reach out to those who have lost loved ones to form relationships or provide for practical needs. Check out <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-do-we-say-to-grieving-people> or <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/family-q-and-a/life-challenges/helping-a-bereaved-friend>
- Consider fostering a waiting child, or providing respite for a foster family. You can come alongside foster/adoptive families to pray and provide practical support. Contact Lauren Boone at lauren@opcmilford.org if interested in learning more.

LECTIO VISIO

Christians believe in God's Word and take him at his Word. Yet 21st century Christians have a difficult time seeing God's Word the same way God's people have for centuries: **visually**. That's what this method of Scripture reading is designed to do: help you see the text.

3 INGREDIENTS

3 candles, or a 3 wick candle

1 Passage (preferably narrative, 5-10 verses)

12 or fewer people (Christians or non-Christians)

10 COMMANDMENTS OF LECTIO VISIO

1. No prep! (Lead by asking)
2. Pray simple prayers (tsp prayers: Thank you, Sorry, Please)
3. Shut your Bibles (yup, you read that correctly. Don't worry.)
4. Open your eyes (senses) and picture the scene. Try to get down in the dust of the story.
5. Direct the Film (you as the leader help the biblical scene come alive for those you're studying with)
6. No peeking ahead (1 verse at a time)
7. No rabbit trails (stick to what the text says, not "I feels")
8. Keep telling the story (instead of explaining, WONDER)
9. Keep silence
10. Lead by asking the 5Qs
11. Repeat #2 TSP.

THE 5 QUESTIONS

1. What did it say?
2. What do you see?
3. What happens next? (Guess)
4. What do you hear? (Then/Now)
5. What do you want to do?

A COUPLE EXTRA TIPS FOR LEADERS

Mirror the group. Repeat back what is said and direct them back to the story if things get off track.

Lead Strong. God is actually the one leading the discussion by his Word. Take courage. Have fun. Encourage a bit of playfulness.

Take Notes Here (how did it go? what applications did people give that you can follow up on next week?)