

## Reading Tracks

---

### TRACK ONE

Follow along with basics of the story in a short selection of readings this week..

Monday: Matthew 5:1-20

Tuesday: Matthew 5:21-48

Wednesday: Matthew 6:1-18

Thursday: Matthew 6:19-34

Friday: Matthew 7:1-12

Saturday: Matthew 7:13-29

### TRACK TWO

Get a little bigger perspective by reading assigned sections from *The Story* © 2011 by Zondervan.

Read pages 340-343 this week.

### TRACK THREE

Get the whole story by reading through most of the Bible in longer sections.

In your Bible, read Mark 1-6 this week.

## This Week's Scripture Memory Verse

---

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." Matthew 5:17 (NIV)

## Next Week in Worship

---

**Next Weeks' Message:** *The Kingdom*

**Next Week's Readings:** Psalm 84:1-2, 10-12; Matthew 13:31-35

Jesus came announcing and inaugurating the Kingdom of God (or "Kingdom of Heaven") here in God's world and offering the fullness and blessedness of life to all who believed his good news. When *The Big God Story* continues next week, we'll see that Jesus continued to teach about the ways of the Kingdom through parables that help us understand God's surprising power.



First Lutheran

[www.flcwb.org](http://www.flcwb.org) • [info@flcwb.org](mailto:info@flcwb.org)

4000 Linden Street • White Bear Lake, MN 55110 • 651.429.5349

# Group Discussion

---

## Connect

People sometimes find that the anticipation of a good thing or the fear of a bad thing can be even stronger than the experience itself. Have you ever experienced something like that?

---

## Learn

Read Proverbs 14:12. This little nugget of Biblical wisdom questions our human ability to know what's really best for ourselves in the long term.

- Does this proverb agree with your experience? Are we easily fooled in this way?
- Why do you think it's possible for something to seem right or life-giving but really be dangerous or life-stealing?

Read Matthew 5:3-12, 17. These verses are selections from a portion of Jesus' teaching often called the Sermon on the Mount. In this sermon Jesus addresses his disciples (see 5:1-2) and teaches them the surprising ways of the Kingdom of Heaven lived out here on earth.

- In Matthew 5:17, Jesus says that he fulfills the Old Testament. This is strong validation of the Old Testament for disciples of Jesus, but Jesus also reveals that the Old Testament is incomplete without him. We read a lot of the Old Testament story together last fall. What do you think are some ways that it might be incomplete without Jesus?
- Matthew 5:3-10 are sometimes called the beatitudes. Jesus describes the characteristics of his followers as citizens in the Kingdom of Heaven. What does it tell you about the Kingdom of Heaven that such people can be called blessed (the mournful, the merciful, even those who are persecuted)?
- Take Matthew 5:3 as an example. To be "poor in spirit" implies spiritual humility and dependence. It implies awareness of our need for God. How does being a disciple of Jesus create poverty of spirit? What might help you cultivate this kind of poverty of spirit in your life?

---

## Apply

There are lots of things other than Jesus that promise us fullness, blessedness, or happiness. What do you think is most tempting to you as an alternative source of fullness? And what would help you turn (repent?) away from that temptation and toward the real fullness of life in Jesus?

---

## Pray

As a group, think of people in your life who would be especially blessed to know the fullness of life in Jesus Christ. Pray for them as a group that they would come to know Jesus and be blessed in the Kingdom of Heaven.