

- When your mind has time to wander, what do you think about? Do your thoughts prioritize the kingdom of God?
- What did Jesus demonstrate at the wedding in Cana about His concern for our anxieties? In what ways is that comforting in our worries today?

WEEK 8: JUNE 18-22 Luke 21

The world is full of tension and conflict. That isn't going to change—and, in fact, is destined to get worse before Jesus returns. But even in the most cataclysmic circumstances like wars, rumors of wars, and persecution, we have solid reasons to hang on to hope. We cannot be shaken.

- In the battle between fear and faith in your life, which is winning? Why?
- In a crisis, are you more likely to be focused on self, others, or God? How should you respond when God wants to use your crisis for His glory?
- In what ways have you sought security in the past? How effective were those ways?
- How prepared do you feel for Jesus' return? If you knew He was coming next week, what would you do?
- Do you believe more in your ability to fall away or God's ability to keep you? In what ways does the history of Israel encourage you?

WEEK 9: JUNE 25-29 Mark 13; Matthew 25:1-13

Much of discipleship is a matter of focus. When we stumble and fall, when our hearts grow cold, and when life gets complicated, a loss of focus has usually played a big role. Those who weather the storms and are ready to meet Him are those who have kept their eyes firmly fixed on what's important.

- How aware are you that you're inhabited by God's Spirit? Does your worship feel stale or fresh? Why?
- Do you see the world as a competitive marketplace of true and false spirituality? How guarded are you about your spiritual intake?
- Why is it important to cling to Jesus' words like a lifeline rather than simply absorb His good teaching? How does knowing the Word protect you?
- What does it mean to be a watchman in God's kingdom? Why is Jesus so emphatic about the need to be alert?
- How does a long wait for Jesus' return reveal those who truly love Him? What attitudes are uncovered in you when you have to wait for God to do something?

WALK THRU THE BIBLE

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GOING DEEPER WITH *indeed*

indeed can be used not only as a personal devotional guide, but also as a teaching or discussion tool for small groups. The following questions will help you go deeper with each week's readings, whether individually or in a group. More *indeed* resources can be found at www.indeedmagazine.org.

MAY/JUNE 2007

Jesus spoke often about the future. Sometimes He told of events that the world has not yet seen, such as His return, but more often He taught His disciples to be strong in their coming trials and to trust Him in every situation. He emphasized again and again our current strength and eternal hope in Him.

WEEK 1: MAY 1-4 Luke 22:39-53; Matthew 26:39-54

The need for our hope is obvious: we were born on a cosmic battleground. The Lord our God and the evil serpent are at war, and by our faith, we've been drafted. How do we live in our moments of crisis?

- Have you ever thought of spiritual warfare as a counter-rebellion? Where do you stand in that conflict?
- How hard is it to "let go" and trust God? Do you agree that there's no difference between His will and what we would want for ourselves if we knew all the details?
- Which are you more passionate about—the fulfillment of your desires or the fulfillment of God's will? Why?
- Are you more likely in a conflict to use destructive or constructive weapons? Which are more effective?

WEEK 2: MAY 7-11 Matthew 13

What should we do with kingdom treasures? We've been given the secrets, the resources, and the fruit of the kingdom—or better yet, of the King. Our handling of such eternal treasures defines who we are as disciples.

- Why do some people have "ears to hear" and others don't? What advantage do "ordinary" people have?
- Why doesn't God distribute all of His resources evenly? What kind of person receives more of them?

- Is there anything you would not give up in order to know Christ better? Why do most of us easily let things get in the way of our relationship with Him?
- What “small things” have you overlooked? How can neglecting “small things” turn into a big deal?
- Why doesn’t God go ahead and pull “weeds” from His garden? How are we supposed to respond to people who are not citizens of the kingdom of God?

WEEK 3: MAY 14-18 Matthew 24

Jesus spoke often of His return. He did not tell us when it would happen or exactly what it would look like, but He did promise that we would be able to discern some of the signs and His appearing will be obvious to everyone.

- Have you ever heard deceitful teachings about the second coming? How are they disproved by Jesus’ own words?
- Why do you think Jesus assured His disciples that He would come when they weren’t expecting Him to, but also explained what signs to look for and told them to be on watch?
- What emotions do you feel when you think of Jesus returning soon? Why?
- Is your life flowing in the same direction as God’s goal for world history? If not, what adjustments can you make to change your direction?
- Why will Jesus’ return be a shock to people—including Christians—who are busy pursuing worldly things?

WEEK 4: MAY 21-25 Mark 8:27-38; Luke 9:23-27

The most important “unspoken” question in the New Testament is: “How much do you value Jesus and His kingdom?” The answer will shape a disciple’s life more than anything else because those who love Him passionately will pursue Him passionately. And those who don’t, won’t.

- How can you discover whether your belief in Jesus as Savior is an intellectual belief, a heart belief, or both?
- What do your investments of time, money, and effort say about your values?
- In what ways does discipleship cost a lot? In what ways is it a blessing? Which is bigger—the cost or the blessing?
- Not including Jesus, what in your life makes you feel really “alive”? Why would it be scary to let go of that if God asked you to?
- What does it mean to become “God-centered”? Is there any decision you can make today that would help you be more God-centered?

WEEK 5: MAY 28–JUNE 1 Luke 10:21-24; Matthew 10:5-10

Jesus indicated often that His disciples were vessels of His own nature and that their fullness would come in living for God

and serving others. They were to share whatever He taught them and gave them. They were to traffic in divine mercies.

- How can we experience God’s good pleasure? Why do you think He takes pleasure in using unlikely vessels?
- If we really understood what it meant to have the priceless treasures of God’s Word, His Spirit, and His kingdom, how would we respond?
- Why do those who give away what they have always seem to have more?
- Does the Christian life seem heavy or liberating to you? Why? If heavy, what burdens can you let go of now?
- What message do your words preach? What message does your life preach? Does your message fit the commissioning Jesus gave His disciples?

WEEK 6: JUNE 4-8 Matthew 19:23-30

Discipleship involves sacrifices and rewards. But often we get focused on the sacrifices and forget the rewards—or at least put them far in the back of our minds. The result is a discouraging relationship with God that hardly resembles the joyful, hopeful, abundant life Jesus promised.

- Why do most Christians fall short of radical commitment to Christ?
- In what way is the Spirit “thicker than blood”? Have you experienced the deep bonds of Christian fellowship?
- Why are Christians reluctant to think about the rewards of serving Jesus? Why do you think Jesus told His disciples about rewards?
- Why do you think Jesus was so harsh in His statements about wealth? Why did He single money out above other idols people cling to?
- Do you face any impossibilities today? How confident are you that all things are possible with God?

WEEK 7: JUNE 11-15 Matthew 6:25-34; John 2:1-11

Few things challenge our faith more than the anxiety that comes from our trials—or the trials we anticipate that never actually happen. Big worries, small worries, long-term, short-term, life issues, and mundane concerns—all can clutter our minds and steal our peace. Jesus gave us the keys to overcome our worries. All we need to do is use them.

- What do you think would happen if you simply decided to ignore every concern and pursue Jesus’ agenda with a passion?
- When you find your values to be out of place, what steps can you take to re-order your priorities?
- What does our anxiety say about our ability to trust? What statement does it make about God? In what ways does it impugn His character?