

Working With The Voice Transcript

WWTV Episode 007

Reading of Matthew Chapters 1-10

July 18, 2018

I'm so glad you have been continuing to listen! Working With The Voice is a course that is designed to help you strengthen the communication between you and the Holy Spirit. This is the seventh episode. Every episode builds on the information from the past and lays down the foundation for the episodes that follow. In today's episode, we are going to go through a short introduction then three of my friends, Tracy Biggs, JoDee Herschend, and Amy Waldrop are going to read the Book of Matthew Chapters 1 through 10 from the New International Version of the Bible. Why am I doing this when you could just go and read it for yourself? Well, the jigs up. Most people don't read the bible. I'm a voracious reader and I hadn't read it all the way through until a couple of years ago. I have heard people sheepishly admit they know almost nothing about the bible while they were in the midst of an argument about it. So here's the excuses I've heard and given for not reading it: it's boring and I don't get anything out of it, I don't have time, I have no idea where to start, it's confusing, I forgot, and then what is true for many people, even though it's not true for me, they don't like to read.

To clear this up, the bible isn't boring, you will get something out of it, you do have time, I'll tell you where to start and I'll help you make sense of it, but the final part about people not liking to read is the kicker. So the statistics on this are bizarre. The bible is the source of so much direction for some and controversy for others, so do you find it odd that multiple studies show that only 20% of American adults have ever read very much of the bible? And I'm not positive that I believe the self-reported statistics because ultimately, the studies I read do not seem to take into account the fact that literacy statistics show that 30% of American adults read at a "basic" reading level, and that's not a very high reading level. In my experience, people who read at this low level do not voluntarily read much at all unless they are absolutely forced to. I assume that you are the types of people who may read more and at a higher level than the general population, but since we all have to be on the same page, I'm doing this episode so you can hear the stories first, and then I will do the explanation of them starting in the next episode.

The bible is a record of God's written history with His chosen people, Jews and Christians. The bible is a compilation of 66 books split into the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is the story of the covenant or agreement that God had with humans before Jesus brought the new covenant. We won't be going much into the Old Testament, not because it isn't important, but because the focus of this podcast is to show you Jesus's pattern of living and how that connects you and the Holy Spirit today. Lots of people are very confused about what the bible says because they don't understand the difference in the Old Testament covenant and the New Testament covenant. Basically, in the Old Testament, people did not have the influence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. In fact, the Holy Spirit is only mentioned three times in the Old Testament. When the old covenant was in place, for the common person to hear God, He had to go to someone else, a prophet, a priest, or a scribe who could read the laws to him. People were blessed or cursed according to whether they followed formulas and laws that told them what to do in different circumstances. By the time of Jesus's ministry, there were over 600 ceremonial rules that had to be followed, and it wasn't possible to follow them all. Throughout the Old Testament, there are passages that refer to the fact that these laws were temporary until the new law was given in the future, and that the new law would be better. Jesus brought that new law. During Jesus's three and a half year ministry, there was a unique time, a gap when people were in

between the old covenant but the new had not been fully granted yet. The new covenant came into force when Jesus was resurrected after crucifixion. This new covenant is what Jesus meant when he spoke of the Kingdom of God, so we're living in the time of the Kingdom of God. The new covenant meant that people were not supposed to work off the laws and formulas from before, but they were supposed to have a direct relationship with God through the Holy Spirit and they were to be educated on what that looked like by the example that Jesus showed through his life on earth. From the arrival of the Holy Spirit, the new covenant was fully established. You can now ask what you are supposed to do in any situation, and get an answer that is direct to you, specific to your circumstances. Once you hear and understand, you don't have to have a formula to follow, you now have to decide if you will do what you were told to do, if you will obey or not.

Biblical stories are very deep, they can be read on many different levels. There is an initial basic story and that is the first level that you need to start with. What events in the story happened and in what order? That is the content of the material. There is another level though that begins almost as soon as you start into that content, and it's the context of the story. Context is the meaning behind the content. This is where we get into trouble a lot of the time. There are people who only want to work from the literal interpretation of what is said in the bible. That's where you get the attitude of "The Bible said it, I believe it, that settles it." There are others who want to inject their own ideas into the text so that it means what they want it to mean. Neither of these ways is the best. We have to find some way of looking at the content, in the context of the time and culture that not only makes sense, but is accurate to the intent of the writings. Today's episode will just contain the content of Matthew 1-10, but the following week we will go through the explanation in context of Matthew 1-4. I am not a biblical scholar however I have found material in the Matthew Henry Commentary from the 1600's as well as from other teachers that I find to be interesting and enlightening.

Before we start the book of Matthew, there's just a couple more concepts that need to be touched upon. The first four books of the New Testament are called the gospels, or the good news. They tell the story of Jesus's life on earth. No one really knows who wrote them, but they were all written in Greek. They each tell many of the same stories but each of the stories is told to a different audience for different reasons. It is thought that Mark was written first, then Matthew, then Luke, then John. The books of Matthew and Luke seem to have drawn much of their material from the book of Mark. Matthew is considered to be the most important of all the gospels because it was written to Jewish Christians of that time and it provides a good connection between the Old Testament and the New. In addition, it gives examples of things that showed that Jesus fulfilled all of the Old Testament's requirements for him to be the Messiah. That's the focus of the stories, to tell the Jewish people of that time that Jesus really was the Messiah that had been promised throughout the Old Testament. There is a focus on Jesus's words and many of his sermons are recorded. Mark spoke to a non-Jewish Roman audience, and this book's focus is on the things Jesus did, and specifically the miracles he performed. In Luke, the author speaks to a Greek audience and focuses on Jesus as the perfect example of humanity. He stresses how much Jesus loved us and had compassion for us. Finally, the book of John has a completely different tone and focus than the three previous books. The focus is on what Jesus said about himself. So although they may use the same story, they are told in different ways for different reasons. Matthew says, Jesus really is the Messiah. Mark says Jesus was a miracle worker and the people of the time knew this person was different because He could do things no one else could do, and had never done before. Luke says Jesus loved us and had great concern for us, and John identifies the things Jesus said that confirmed that He was truly divine, the incarnation of God.

Matthew

Chapter 1 The Genealogy of Jesus the Messiah

A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham:

²Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,

³Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram,

⁴Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon,

⁵Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse,

⁶and Jesse the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife,

⁷Solomon the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa,

⁸Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram, Jehoram the father of Uzziah,

⁹Uzziah the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,

¹⁰Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, Amon the father of Josiah,

¹¹and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

¹²After the exile to Babylon: Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,

¹³Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, Abiud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor,

¹⁴Azor the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Akim, Akim the father of Eliud,

¹⁵Eliud the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob,

¹⁶and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

¹⁷Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Christ.

Joseph Accepts Jesus as His Son

¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

¹⁹Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

²³"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" --which means, "God with us."

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

²⁵But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Chapter 2

The Magi Visit the Messiah

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem

²and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

⁴When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.

⁵"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶" 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.' "

⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.

⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

The Escape to Egypt

¹³When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

¹⁴So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt,

¹⁵where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

¹⁶When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

¹⁷Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸"A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

The Return to Nazareth

¹⁹After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt

²⁰and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead."

²¹So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel.

²²But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee,

²³and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: "He will be called a Nazarene."

Chapter 3

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea

²and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

³This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.' "

⁴John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey.

⁵People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan.

⁶Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

⁷But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"

⁸Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

⁹And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

¹⁰The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹"I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

The Baptism of Jesus

¹³Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John.

¹⁴But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

¹⁵Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

¹⁶As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Chapter 4 **Jesus is Tested in the Wilderness**

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

²After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

³The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

⁴Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.

⁶"If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: " 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.' "

⁷Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

⁹"All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

¹⁰Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.' "

¹¹Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

¹²When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he returned to Galilee.

Jesus Begins to Preach

¹³Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali--

¹⁴to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁵"Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, along the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles--

¹⁶the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."

¹⁷From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

¹⁸As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.

¹⁹"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

²⁰At once they left their nets and followed him.

²¹Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them,

²²and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Jesus Heals The Sick

²³Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

²⁴News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them.

²⁵Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

Chapter 5

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him,

²and he began to teach.

The Beatitudes

He said:

³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

¹²Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Salt and Light

¹³"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

¹⁴"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.

¹⁵Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

The Fulfillment of the Law

¹⁷"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.

¹⁸I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

¹⁹Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

²⁰For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Murder

²¹"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.'

²²But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca, ' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.

²³"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you,

²⁴leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

²⁵"Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison.

²⁶I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Adultery

²⁷"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'

²⁸But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

Divorce

³¹"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.'

³²But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.

³³"Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord.'

Oaths

³⁴But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne;

³⁵or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King.

³⁶And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black.

³⁷Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

Eye for Eye

³⁸"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.'

³⁹But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

⁴⁰And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.

⁴¹If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.

⁴²Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Love For Enemies

⁴³"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

⁴⁴But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

⁴⁵that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

⁴⁶If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?

⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?

⁴⁸Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Chapter 6 **Giving to the Needy**

"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

²"So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

⁴so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Prayer

⁵"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

⁶But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

⁷And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

⁹"This, then, is how you should pray: " 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

¹⁰your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹Give us today our daily bread.

¹²Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. '

¹⁴For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

¹⁵But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Fasting

¹⁶"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,

¹⁸so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Treasures in Heaven

¹⁹"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.

²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²²"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light.

²³But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

²⁴"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Do Not Worry

²⁵"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?

²⁶Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

²⁷Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life ?

²⁸"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.

²⁹Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.

³⁰If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

³¹So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

³²For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

³³But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

³⁴Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Chapter 7 **Judging Others**

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged.

²For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

³"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?

⁴How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?

⁵You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

⁶"Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

Ask, Seek, Knock

⁷"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

⁸For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

⁹"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

¹¹If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

¹²So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

The Narrow and Wide Gates

¹³"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

¹⁴But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

True and False Prophets

¹⁵"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

¹⁶By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?

¹⁷Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

¹⁸A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

²⁰Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

True and False Disciples

²¹"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

²²Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'

²³Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

The Wise and Foolish Builders

²⁴"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

²⁵The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

²⁶But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

²⁷The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

²⁸When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching,

²⁹because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

Chapter 8

Jesus Heals a Man With Leprosy

When he came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him.

²A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

³Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cured of his leprosy.

⁴Then Jesus said to him, "See that you don't tell anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

The Faith of the Centurion

⁵When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help.

⁶"Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering."

⁷Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him."

⁸The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

⁹For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

¹⁰When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.

¹¹I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

¹²But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

¹³Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! It will be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that very hour.

Jesus Heals Many

¹⁴When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever.

¹⁵He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.

¹⁶When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick.

¹⁷This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: "He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases."

The Cost of Following Jesus

¹⁸When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake.

¹⁹Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

²⁰Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

²¹Another disciple said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

²²But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Jesus Calms the Storm

²³Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him.

²⁴Without warning, a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping.

²⁵The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

²⁶He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

²⁷The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

Jesus Restores Two Demon-Possessed Men

²⁸When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way.

²⁹"What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?"

³⁰Some distance from them a large herd of pigs was feeding.

³¹The demons begged Jesus, "If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs."

³²He said to them, "Go!" So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and died in the water.

³³Those tending the pigs ran off, went into the town and reported all this, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men.

³⁴Then the whole town went out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they pleaded with him to leave their region.

Chapter 9

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed Man

Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town.

²Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

³At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!"

⁴Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts?"

⁵Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

⁶But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home."

⁷And the man got up and went home.

⁸When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men.

The Calling of Matthew

⁹As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

¹⁰While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" came and ate with him and his disciples.

¹¹When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"

¹²On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.

¹³But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Jesus Questioned About Fasting

¹⁴Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"

¹⁵Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.

¹⁶"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse.

¹⁷Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

Jesus Raises a Dead Girl and Heals a Sick Woman

¹⁸While he was saying this, a ruler came and knelt before him and said, "My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live."

¹⁹Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples.

²⁰Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak.

²¹She said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed."

²²Jesus turned and saw her. "Take heart, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed from that moment.

²³When Jesus entered the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd,

²⁴he said, "Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him.

²⁵After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up.

²⁶News of this spread through all that region.

Jesus Heals the Blind and the Mute

²⁷As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"

²⁸When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes, Lord," they replied.

²⁹Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith will it be done to you";

³⁰and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, "See that no one knows about this."

³¹But they went out and spread the news about him all over that region.

³²While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus.

³³And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

³⁴But the Pharisees said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons."

³⁵Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.

The Workers are Few

³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

³⁷Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.

³⁸Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Chapter 10

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John;

³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;

⁴Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

⁵These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.

⁶Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.

⁷As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.'

⁸Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

⁹Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts;

¹⁰take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep.

¹¹"Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave.

¹²As you enter the home, give it your greeting.

¹³If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you.

¹⁴If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town.

¹⁵I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

¹⁶I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

¹⁷"Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues.

¹⁸On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.

¹⁹But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say,

²⁰for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

²¹"Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.

²²All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

²³When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

²⁴"A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master.

²⁵It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebub, how much more the members of his household!

²⁶"So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.

²⁷What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.

²⁸Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

- ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny ? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.
- ³⁰And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.
- ³¹So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.
- ³²"Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.
- ³³But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.
- ³⁴"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.
- ³⁵For I have come to turn " 'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law--
- ³⁶a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'
- ³⁷"Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me;
- ³⁸and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.
- ³⁹Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
- ⁴⁰"He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me.
- ⁴¹Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward.
- ⁴²And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

I want to thank my friends Tracy Biggs, JoDee Herschend, and Amy Waldrop for doing this reading of Matthew chapters 1-10. I am really excited to begin the explanation of Chapters 1 through 4 next week. I hope that you enjoyed this enough that it begins to break down any reservations you have about reading the bible. I hope you are continuing your Daily Practice and if you want to fast track your spiritual progress, go to the website workingwiththevoice.com, and download the book of Matthew. During the time for scripture reading, read a chapter a day out loud to yourself. You'll be amazed at how much better you understand the story when you do this. Also, this enforces the principles of the importance of the spoken word. Thank you again for listening. I'm Juliet Mee, and this is Working With The Voice.