

The Road M.A.P. Discipleship Challenge

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1. Introduction:

As we journey through the Book of Matthew... it is helpful to have a road map. The road map helps ensure that we don't miss out on the intended purpose that God has for us and that we arrive precisely where we were supposed to arrive. Each week we will have a **NEW Road M.A.P. Challenge** that will give practical steps for that week. We will have a step that goes along with each message we preach as we go through the Book of Matthew.

The Gospel of Matthew – or, the “good news” reported by Matthew, takes us on the journey through the birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection of Jesus and ends with the call given to all who would become His followers – to GO and make disciples of the nations.

Using the Road M.A.P. is a helpful way for us to engage with the Good News and gives practical ways that we can begin engaging our lives in the Great Commission. Sharing this Good News with others is an important part of fulfilling our purpose here on Earth. We are part of the Body of Christ, and although, each of the members have different functions (Romans 12), and we have differing roles, there are some common purposes that we ALL share as believers. The Great Command – To love the Lord God with all of our heart, soul and mind and to love our neighbors as ourself & The Great Commission – to Go and make disciples.

The Great Commission – *“Go therefore and make disciples of the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, forever to the end.”* – Jesus

2. The Road M.A.P. to Discipleship Challenge

M – memorization: Hiding God’s Word in our heart (Psalm 119) is a great way focus our thoughts, desires and minds towards Jesus. Throughout the M.A.P. challenge we will be memorizing from Matthew and by the time we are done, we will have memorized the B-attitudes (Mt 5:3-12) and the Great Commission (Mt 28:18-20)

1. I would encourage meditating on and memorizing Matthew 5-7, 10, 13, 18-20, 24-25, 28:18-20. Those are six separate times where Jesus gave instructions to his disciples on how they were to live, their character and their mission. (of course there are many other great verse and passages to memorize!) Review your new verses each week, or you will forget them.
2. There are many different ways to memorize. You may already have a technique that works for you, if so – great! If not here are some suggestions:
 - a. <https://biblememory.com/> you can download the Bible memory app. This is a great way to get into the habit of meditating on the Word.
 - b. Read it, write it, say it, pray it. Repeat until memorized.

A – application: the application step is where we begin to disciple others. There are four main parts to fulfilling the GC with others.

1. Be a witness:

- a. **Good Works:** We are told to put our lights on display so others can see the Father in us (Matthew 5) We do this through the way we love others, acts of kindness, sharing encouraging words, being available for others, generosity, etc.
 - b. **Sharing our personal testimony:** another way we witness to others is by sharing our personal story. This could be anything from how we got saved by Jesus, to how he helped you through a difficult time, to what he is doing in your life right now. When we share our stories, we demonstrate who Jesus is to us. Our story is a powerful way to reach others.
2. **Evangelism:** sharing the good news with other. When we share the good news of Jesus with others, we are evangelizing them! exciting! The truth is, we should be sharing the Good News of Jesus with believers & unbelievers. Whether you are speaking to someone who has never heard of Jesus, or, someone who already believes, but is lost in addiction, or bondage, or depression. Sharing the Good News of Jesus with others, that he lived, died, rose again, forgives our sin, sent the Holy Spirit to empower us and that he is coming back again to gather all those who receive him as their Lord & Savior to spend an eternity with them! this is the GOOD NEWS.
- a. A great tool to help here is the Bridge. If you click on the link, you will find a helpful tool that will show you one way you can share the Gospel with others. The Church Renewal app <https://renewal.tools/#home>
3. **Teach them to obey all Jesus’ commands:**
- a. **Baptism in Jesus** - for the forgiveness of sins. **Baptism in the Holy Spirit** – to empower ministry and sanctification (transformation, becoming holy, becoming like Christ)
 - b. **The marks of a true disciple:** In Matthew 5-7, 10, 13, 18-20, 24-25 & 28:18-20 Jesus defines what a disciple of his looks like. He sets a high standard but offers the Holy Spirit to enable us to obey his commands & forgiveness when we sin. Growth happens one

step at a time coupled with prayer, hard work and most importantly, the inward working of the Holy Spirit.

- c. **Repentance & emotional healing:** Jesus' death & resurrection broke the power of sin in our lives. We have been given tools, or, weapons, that have divine power to demolish strongholds (2 Cor 10).
 - i. The Church Renewal app <https://renewal.tools/#home> you will find simple steps to use power tools such as confession, forgiveness, breaking generational bondages, receiving inner healing, etc. within the app, you can familiarize yourself with the tools and then begin using them with others.
 - ii. If you need guidance working through an issue or get stuck with someone else. Please contact us the church and we will help!
- d. **Summary: Love God, Love people.** (We do this by following ALL of Jesus' commands John 14:21, 1 John 5:3)

P – Prayer: as P. Ray has often said, "Prayer isn't everything, but everything should come out of prayer." Prayer is a big part of a believers life and is the necessary 'life blood' behind every step we take.

1. **Prayer for ourselves.** We need to be praying regularly for the Spirits empowerment, direction and favor as we step out in faith.
2. **Prayer for the person we wish to disciple.** We need to be praying regularly for the person we are reaching out to. Before, sometimes during, and after we have reached out to them.
 - a. **Sample Prayer for ourselves and person we want to disciple:** "Heavenly Father, I ask that you would fill me with your Holy Spirit, that you would give me favor with _____ (*name of the person you are reaching out to*), that you would give me opportunities to share the Good News with him/her and that you would show me a practical step I can take to reach _____ (*name of person you are reaching out to*) and show him/her who you are and what you are like. In Jesus' Name, Amen"
3. **Prayer for the Church to grow in the Great Commission.** We need to pray for Renewal in the Church. That's God's people would turn to him, rely on his Spirit and that we would become passionate to fulfill the Great Commission.
 - a. **Sample Prayer for the Church:** "Heavenly Father, I ask that you would raise up a generation of believers in your church that would turn from sin, lay down their personal desires, and would take up the charge to fulfill the Great Commission. I ask that you would renew us, your Bride, and that you would pour out your Spirit on us – giving us the desire and ability to do your will. In Jesus' Name, Amen."

3. Road M.A.P. Weekly Challenges: NEW CHALLENGE UPDATED EACH WEEK.

Week 1: Passage of the Week: Matthew 1:1-17

M – memorize Matthew 5:3. Read it, write it, pray it, say it.

A – Just as Jesus called the GOOD out of Matthew. Pick someone that you can text, email, or call and give them an encouraging word. (DO IT NOW)

P – pray for the Holy Spirit to empower you as you step out in faith, pray for the person you just encouraged. Pray for our church to grow in the Great Commission.

Week 2: Passage of the Week: Matthew 1:18 – 2

M – memorize Matthew 5:4. Read it, write it, pray it, say it.

A – Jesus encourages us by promising to be with us always. Who is someone in your circle that you know is lonely, struggling, or hurting right now? Show them what Jesus is like by being there for them. Either ZOOM, in person, or a phone call. Have a friendly conversation about whatever is on their heart.

P – pray for the Holy Spirit to empower you as you step out in faith, pray for the person you reached out to feel connected to you. Pray for our church to grow in the Great Commission.

Week 3: Passage of the Week: Matthew 3 – 4:11

M – memorize Matthew 5:5. Read it, write it, pray it, say it.

A – John the Baptist encourages us to be helpers for the Groom (Jesus) preparing the bride (us – His church) for when He will return in all His Glory to claim her. Each of us is called - we have a responsibility as ‘Shospen’ to be serving our Lord doing all the we can to build and protect His Church. Are you ready to become less so that He can become more? Think of someone you can practically serve by encouraging them in their walk with the Lord. Connect with them this week, share your experience with temptation and faith, disciple them like no one else can!

P – pray for the Holy Spirit to empower you as you step out in faith, pray for the person you are reaching out to that they would keep turning to our Saviour. Pray for our church to grow in the Great Commission.

Week 4: Passage of the Week: Matthew 5

M – memorize Matthew 5:6. Read it, write it, pray it, say it.

A – At the outset of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus zeroes in on the principles, the attitudes and the practices that we should follow if we want to experience life on this earth and life in heaven in all its

fullness as we were meant to do. I've always thought of "The Beatitudes" as Be – attitudes, attitudes we're supposed to BE. The first four focus on our relationship with God. So how's yours? Use these four (which you've now memorized!) to give yourself an end of the school year report card.

P – pray for the Holy Spirit to empower you to live out in practice these principles that Jesus gives us. Pray for comfort and wisdom from God; humility and meekness before God; and a hunger and thirst for God and that these attitudes would be contagious to those around us. Pray for our church to grow in the Great Commission.

Week 5: Passage of the Week: Matthew 5-7

M – Memorize Matthew 5:7. Read it, write it, pray it, say it.

A – Application The first four beatitudes deal with our relationship to God but now a transition takes place and the next four deal with our relationship to each other. Have you experienced the mercy of God? Not only is it the greatest thing you can ever experience - the mercy and love of God - but it's a prerequisite to being merciful yourself. What fills your heart today? What reigns there? Is it purity? Is it peace? Who reigns there? The answer to that question will determine how you are able to stand in the face of persecution for being like Jesus. With Jesus, you will see the source for what it is, refuse to retaliate in kind and respond positively when trials come. The Sermon on the Mount like all Scripture points us to the Lord Jesus Christ. The preacher of the Sermon on the Mount IS the Sermon on the Mount. His very words are meant to draw us into intimate contact with Him and then to send us out to do what He's called each of us to do.

P – Pray for the Holy Spirit to empower you to live out in practice these principles that Jesus gives us. Pray that the mercy you have received is freely given away as well; that your heart may remain pure; that the peace of God in you allows you to be a peacemaker in your world and that you continue to grow in faith so as to withstand the fiery darts of persecution that come your way. Pray that these attitudes would be contagious to those around us and as a result that we – the church would fulfill our part in the Great Commission.

Week 6: Passage of the Week: Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 10:17-31, Acts 2:36-41

M – memorize Matthew 5:8. Read it, write it, pray it, say it.

A – application – 1) do you feel you are living out your commitment to Christ currently? Why or why not? REMEMBER you are saved by GRACE through FAITH. NO one reaches perfection, but we need to be headed in the correct direction. 2) who is someone that needs encouragement in your life? Pray and ask God for a word of encouragement and then share it with the person.

P – pray for yourself to have a rekindled love for Jesus and for the Spirits power to enable you to live for him whole heartily. Then pray for the person you are going to encourage this week. Pray that they would experience the unmerited grace and love of God. Pray also for our church to grow in love for Jesus and discipling others.

Week 7: Passage of the Week: Matthew 8

M – memorize Matthew 5:9. Read it, write it, pray it, say it.

A – application 1) In your quiet time with the Lord, choose a passage (*perhaps from the Sermon on The Mount*) and do the following: **ASK** Jesus how you can obey that passage that day, **LISTEN** for what he wants to say to you and write it down, and **OBEY** Jesus in simple faith! 2) who is someone that needs encouragement in your life? Pray and ask God for a word of encouragement and then share it with the person.

P – pray for yourself to have a rekindled love for Jesus and for the Spirit's power to enable you to live for him whole heartily. Then pray for the person you are going to encourage this week. Pray that they would experience the unmerited grace and love of God. Pray also for our church to grow in love for Jesus and discipling others.

Week 8: Passage of the Week: Matthew 9-11

MAP Challenge Jesus' call to those who follow him:

M - memorize – Matthew 5:10. Read it, write it, pray it, say it.

A – application – application & prayer step below

P – pray – prayer & application step below

1. Pray – pray for the desire to give him everything. Pray for him to raise up laborers for the harvest. Pray for our church to be passionate for the Great Commission and for reaching the lost.
2. GO – are you willing? If so, prayerfully commit yourself to him. This week: commit to praying the lost and those struggling within your sphere. Ask: for opportunities and then look for ways to be a blessing to them. “give a cup of cold water.”
 - a. If the opportunity presents itself: seek to pray for them, listen to their story, and share your Jesus story with them (if they want to hear it).
3. REST – do you feel rest in your relationship with Jesus? If so, great! Keep going to him! If not, ask him what is blocking you from experiencing his rest and peace. Commit: share this with a friend or mentor, who will pray for and with you.

Week 9: Passage of the Week: Matthew 12-13

MAP Challenge: Keeping the Sabbath.

M – Memorize Matthew 28:16 (The opening phrase of the Great Commission!)

A – Application: One of the most common things that the religious elite of the day, the Pharisees, kept trying to trip Jesus up on was the Sabbath that God created on the 7th day and then commanded us to keep as the fourth Commandment that gave to His people – us - in Exodus. By the time of Jesus, they had packed so many of their religious laws based on tradition on top of and around the original command of God that the complete spirit and intent of the law was long gone. Perhaps it has also become ‘long gone’ with you. How are you doing at keeping one day a week separate so that you might

focus on God, honour Him and be a good steward of the life He has given you in actions and thought? At first glance, it seems to have a lower significance than some of the other Commandments but is that right? Could it be that we've thought that it was primarily a 'Don't Do Work' command and stopped there because it lets us off the hook rather than looking to the real intent which was to stop our work so we could instead do what God would have us do for at least one day a week and focus on loving Him, loving others, being disciplined and making disciples? Take a few moments and truly REST, REFLECT, RECREATE and REMEMBER in your Sabbath.

P – Prayer:

1. **Ask** God to examine your GIGO / GIGO index. **Listen!** Confess to Him those things that you are letting in to your inner self that are polluting your soul and clouding up your connection with Him. Express gratitude for the good that comes from you as an expression of the good He has planted within you and express your desire for an even closer connection to the vine.
2. **Ask** God to speak to you about how you are honouring Him on your Sabbath day and keeping it holy. **Listen!** Confess those things that He points out to you that have crowded out the time that He wants you to devote to Him and simply doing good. **Ask** Him for practical ways you can observe the Sabbath that will bring refreshment to your soul and give glory to Him.
3. Pray for the desire to **obey!**

Week 10: Passage of the Week: Matthew 14-15

MAP Challenge: Following the Master and Commander

M – Memorize Matthew 28:17

A – Application: I think we'd all agree that Jesus is 'supposed' to be our Master and Commander but is He really, practically, functionally? Peter and the rest of the disciples find themselves at one of many crossroads where this question arises, It's part of the training and strengthening that Jesus is taking them through so that they can carry on without Him as He is about to begin (Matthew 16) to prepare them for His death. The disciples are making their way by themselves across the Sea of Galilee when a strong wind comes up that they can make no headway into it as the waves "torment" their small boat. It's 3 am and an apparent apparition appears before them. They're terrified that it's a ghost. Jesus calms them but unbidden Peter with a comical "IF it's you" included tells Jesus to call him out to walk on the water with Him. I wonder if we are any better at seeing Jesus in our midst? We might even struggle in a calm serene setting to do so but this is a storm with the noise and confusion. It puts Peter's step of faith into new perspective. Truth be told we are equally challenged by the reaction of the other 11. I'm reminded of the way I would studiously check out the floor when I knew the teacher was looking for someone to single out. There was no "wait – let me go first", they were quite content (read 'fearful') to let Peter try, walk and fail. But even so – Peter was the one who learned some valuable lessons about failure and that was extremely important because we know that there was one still in the future for him on the night Jesus was betrayed that many would not have recovered from. Judas didn't. How does our faith measure up? How do we handle our failings? Are we willing to learn from our mistakes and be better for it or do we have such a low view of just how big God's grace is that we've decided to stay in

the boat lowering our heads in fear of failure? I dare say that if we truly want to love God, love people, be discipled and make disciples we've got to get out of the boat!

P – Prayer and Reflection:

1. **What is your boat?** What represents safety and security in your life apart from God Himself – maybe even supplants Him? Where do you turn when the going gets rough and stormy? In what area of your life are you shrinking back from fully and courageously – even outrageously trusting God?
2. **Ask** God to examine who or what is your boat – your security blanket **Listen!** Rejoice if He affirms that He is the one who you rely on to sustain you in both good and tough times. Confess to Him and repent from those things that you find your hope and security in other than him.
3. **Thank God for His grace** which grants the freedom to fail, Ask Him to teach you and build your faith through the lessons He gives in and through your failures. He knows you're imperfect!
4. **Ask** Jesus, like Peter, for practical ways you can take some steps of faith this week in obedience to Him.

Week 11: Passage of the Week: Matthew 16-17

MAP Challenge: Choosing Your Life Foundation and Living On It

M – Memorize Matthew 28:18

A – Application: The disciples are about to graduate into the next level of their training and Jesus knows time is running short. It's time to find out what they've learned about who He is and to start preparing them for the culmination of His mission – the cross and His resurrection. There is one fundamental thing they must know and cling to from this point on and Jesus needs to know if they have it. He helps them by setting up the distinction between what they've seen and have come to understand who He is as opposed to what 'the people' they are crossing paths say who He is so He asks. Their response is that most think he is a reborn prophet nicely slotting him into the 'great guy – great man of God' category but far from the reality. Despite all the hundreds of prophecies, no one as yet has recognized Jesus for who He is and what He has come to do. Have the disciples? So comes the question from Jesus to them: *Who do you say that I am?* Our application is simply to sit with these other disciples and answer the question. Who do you say Jesus is? Not just with the knowledge you have in your head but from the depths of your soul. Who do you say Jesus is? Everything hinges on your answer! For without this being securely cemented in your life, the anchor that holds, you will be buffeted by every storm, every new idea, every temptation, every slippery slope that seeks to slowly slide you away from God. Who do you say Jesus is? Is it reflected in your daily life? What sort of spiritual foundation are you standing on? How do you see yourself fitting into His church that Jesus is building?

P – Prayer and Reflection:

1. IF you would agree from the depths of who you are and what you believe and hold dear to along with Peter that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God What is your boat? Then it's time to be on your knees in gratitude to God for His grace and His revelation in your life that Jesus is

who He says He is! Ask God if there are any cracks in that foundation that need to be repaired and then listen, obey His leading and journal it to remember.

2. IF you do not agree with Peter's confession or find resistance in your heart to Jesus' words "*I am the way, the truth and the life. No comes to the Father but through me*" John 14:6 then it's time to be on your knees asking God to reveal the source of your resistance and what foundation you are actually building on and the practical steps you need to take to come to the Father. Listen, repent and obey His leading.
3. IF you are unsure of upon what you stand then keep pursuing the truth with all that you have. Ask God to help you along the journey. He will. He longs to have you experience His love, His forgiveness, His family, His Church and be wholly committed to following Jesus.
4. **Walk through John 14:6 and journal how Jesus is THE WAY for you, how Jesus is THE TRUTH in your life, how Jesus is THE LIFE that you live out each day. Ask Him for practical ways that you can be examples to and share with others what it means for you to have this bedrock foundation.**

Week 12: Passage of the Week: Matthew 17-18

MAP Challenge: Leading Questions

M – Memorize Matthew 28:19

A – Application: Matthew 14-18 has taken place around a series of probing questions from Jesus, from the disciples and the religious leaders of the day to Him and that theme is going to continue. The questions however are becoming more focused and Jesus is very intentionally priming His disciples for what is to come for Him and them – the cross and His resurrection and beyond. In the questions coming from the disciples we see that growth is taking place in their understanding of who Jesus is and what it truly means to follow Him. In four separate instances in these two chapters (17-18) we see two very obvious things. The disciples are building upon Jesus as their foundation of faith. Day by day they are growing. The other obvious thing is that they generally do it in a format that is very familiar to us. Two steps forward, on step back. Over and over again. This should not be at all surprising to us as we've already established that it is through the trying and often coming up short that we actually do our best learning. That should encourage us to keep at it for we are also disciples on the same journey and should look to their example of continuing on in The Way. The 4 questions allow us to get real specific in our applications. First there is the transfiguration. Most of us I suspect have wanted to stop the world from turning when we have a mountain top experience – an experience when we feel especially close to Jesus and the cloud of beauty, peace and wonder that surround us in those moments. But Jesus would encourage us, as He does His disciples, to not get caught in trying to prolong those moments – to camp out in the bliss and forget that there is mission for us yet to accomplish. Deep down we know for every mountain there is a valley and it's in the valley where we turn to our Shepherd and we grow. From the high of the transfiguration we go below to the lack of faith in the other 9 disciples who have been trying to heal a boy while Jesus and the three have been up on the mountain. They have failed miserably, and they don't know why. It's not that they don't have any faith – even that the size of a mustard seed suffices according to Jesus and they've already done other healings so what gives? It's their lack of faith in the one who is actually The One. Practically we all need to take periodic time-outs and examine

whether we've actually stopped listening to God and acknowledging His enabling power and presence and have stepped out on our own plan, our own formula rather than seeking His. Because if we were not careful we find ourselves getting a little amped on ourselves and never actually voicing it but looking a little too much to the sides comparing our standing before God with others and just who is standing just a little bit taller!! We can even start to think that we've got a handle on the fundamentals and that we are going the extra mile in our obedience and service in things like forgiving others but Peter quickly discovers, as we should remind ourselves too, that the standard is Jesus and we are the unforgiving servant in the parable! The discipleship mission: to become more and more like Him. Who are you grading yourself on the curve with when it comes to offering forgiveness? Who is God reminding you of right now that you must forgive? What practical steps can you take to show that what you've been harbouring is now gone?

P – Prayer and Reflection:

1. Before we do anything else, we need to reflect on how marvelous, how wonderful, how all encompassing God's grace is and give Him our gratitude and praise!
2. Reflect on and ask God if you've been sitting on the mountain top for too long while the mission God has called you to requires you to "get up" and not to be afraid. I doubt that it was very often easy to follow Jesus as one of the twelve but look how they grew and what they accomplished through the power and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We are also His disciples and the mission remains. Ask God where He would want you to go with Him to serve His purposes. Journal His response and start taking even baby steps in the direction He leads you.
3. It's the age old question but still as relevant as it ever was. What or whom are you putting your faith in? How does that show in your life? Ask God for practical ways you can let your light shine before others.
4. It is abundantly clear that the only one we hurt in being unforgiving is ourselves. So why carry it around. Mirror the forgiveness granted to you by Jesus by letting go of any perceived right you have to hold a grudge, get even, think ill of someone, throw an "if" into the equation instead of making your forgiveness unconditional. Instead agree with God in prayer that you will respond with good words and good intentions when you are mistreated and leave all the rest to God.

Week 13: Passage of the Week: Matthew 19

M – Memorize Matthew 28:20 (wrapping up the Great Commission!)

A – Application: Matthew 19:28-30. In these verses, Jesus is imparting to his disciples the great Kingdom mindset... one that is centered around eternity and the renewal that is yet to come! Is this your mindset? Set aside a chunk of time this week, perhaps during your devotions, to meditate on the words of Jesus in this passage. You will benefit from having your journal near by! Have you been asked to set something aside to follow Christ? What impact has that decision had on your life? Is there something Jesus is asking you to let go of now?

P – Prayer and Reflection: "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Matthew 19:26. Spend time in prayer for yourself, as well as anyone whom the Lord brings to mind, and ask God to miraculously move by his Spirit so that we can respond YES to his call!

Week 14: Passage of the Week: Matthew 20-21

MAP Challenge Jesus' call to those who follow him:

M - memorize – PICK a verse from your devotions or the Passage of the Week. Read it, write it, pray it, say it.

A – application – Mt 22:1-10 read this in your devotions. “go to the main roads and invite – good & bad – whomever you find” who is someone in your life that needs Jesus? They may be a believer or unbeliever currently. Ask the Lord for a step you can take to encourage them towards Jesus this week. E.g. see if they will share a prayer request with you and then pray for them; encourage them; share something the Lord is doing in your life with them; help them with something they need help with. Whatever you do, see if you can encourage them in their faith.

P – pray – pray for the person you are reaching out to & pray the Lord will increase your heart for the lost.