

MEMORY VERSE

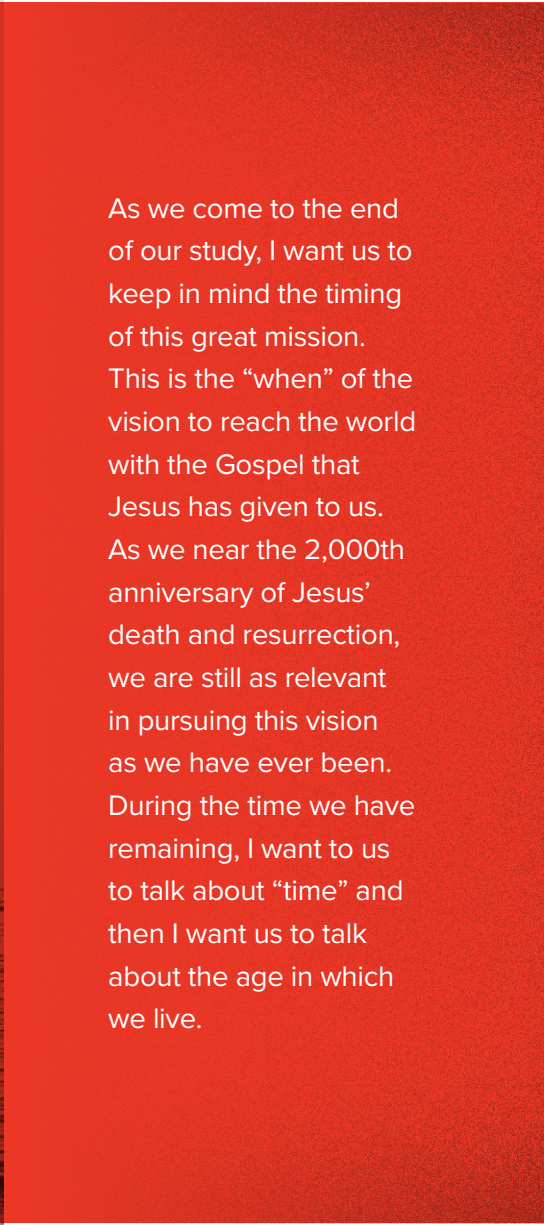
I am with you always, to the end of the age.

MATTHEW 28:20B

SESSION 6

**TO THE END
OF THE AGE**





As we come to the end of our study, I want us to keep in mind the timing of this great mission. This is the “when” of the vision to reach the world with the Gospel that Jesus has given to us. As we near the 2,000th anniversary of Jesus’ death and resurrection, we are still as relevant in pursuing this vision as we have ever been. During the time we have remaining, I want to us to talk about “time” and then I want us to talk about the age in which we live.





SHARE
**YOUR
STORY**

Open your group with prayer. This should be a brief, simple prayer, in which you invite God to be with you as you meet. You can pray for specific requests at the end of the meeting, or stop momentarily to pray if a particular situation comes up during your discussion.

As we have said in previous lessons, sharing our personal stories builds deeper connections among group members. Your story may be exactly what another person needs to hear to encourage or strengthen them. And listening to others' stories is an act of love and kindness to them—and could very well help them to grow spiritually.

Begin your time together by using the following questions and activities to get people talking.

- **What has surprised you most about this group? Where did God meet you over the last six weeks?**
- **What has God been showing you through these sessions? What positive changes has your group noticed in you? Check in with each other about the progress you have made in your spiritual growth during this study. Make plans about whether you will continue your relationship after the group has concluded.**
- **Which social media platforms do you use?**
- **Take some time for each person to share about how they've done with inviting the people on the Circles of Life diagram to church or your small group. What specific conversations are you praying about for the weeks to come?**





WATCH **THE VIDEO**

Use the Teaching Notes space provided to record key thoughts, questions and things you want to remember or follow up on. After watching the video, have someone read the discussion questions in the **Hear God's Story** section and direct the discussion among the group. As you go through each of the subsequent sections, ask someone else to read the questions, and direct the discussion.

HEAR GOD'S STORY

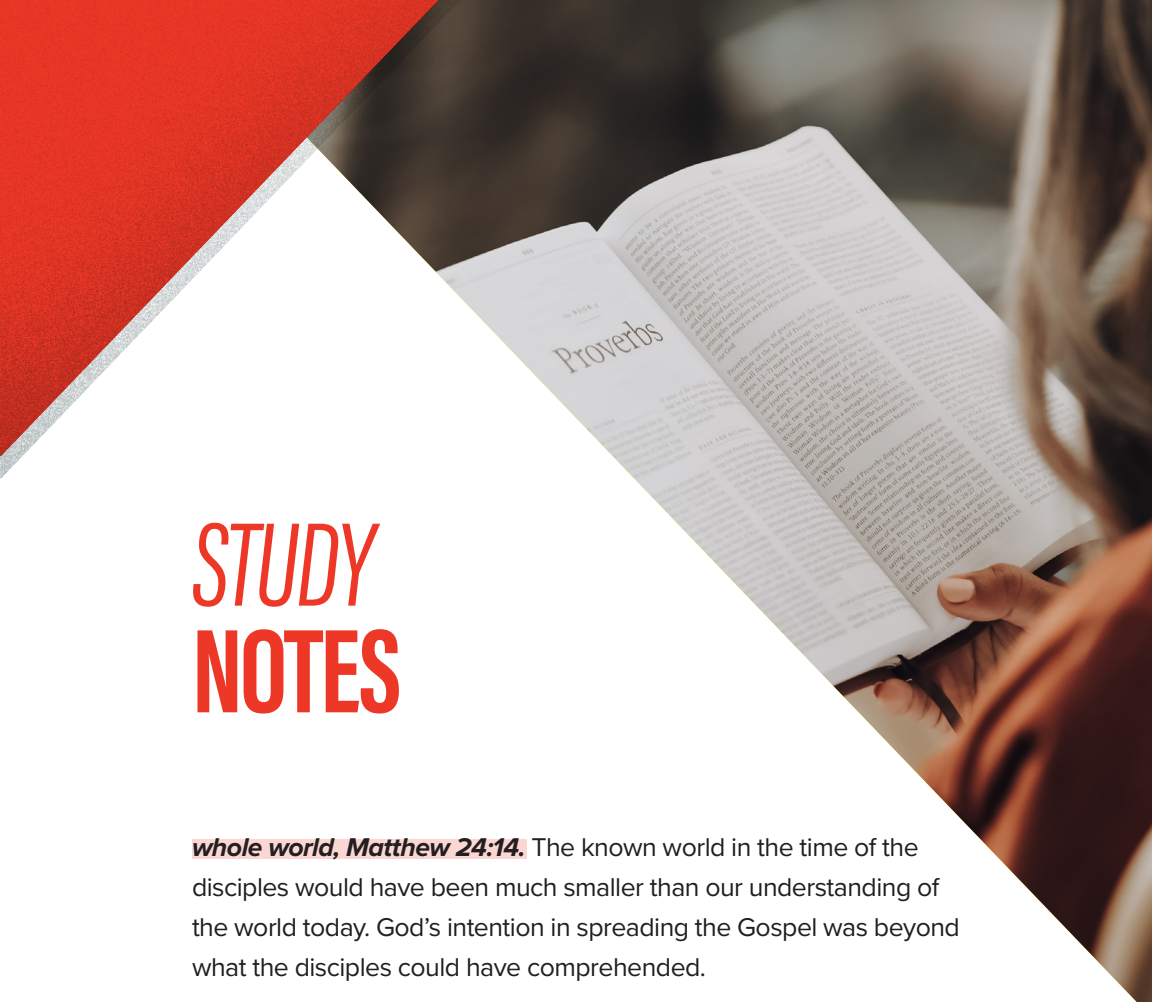
READ MATTHEW 24:14 & 28:20.

And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

MATTHEW 24:14

teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. MATTHEW 28:20

- In the video, Roger said, “In the New Testament, there is a contrast between “the present age” (an “evil age,” Gal 1:4) and “the age(s) to come” when in God’s judgment wrongs will be righted and his people will come into their full inheritance. Using this definition of an “age,” what is the time period Jesus is referring to in Matthew 28:20?
- What does it mean to you personally that Jesus is with you always?
- What are believers to do in this present age?
- According to Matthew 24:14, what will happen once the Gospel is proclaimed throughout the whole world?



STUDY NOTES

whole world, Matthew 24:14. The known world in the time of the disciples would have been much smaller than our understanding of the world today. God's intention in spreading the Gospel was beyond what the disciples could have comprehended.

and then the end will come, Matthew 24:14. For the disciples hearing these words, they would have understood this as the end of the Jewish state along with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. But, there is also a meaning for believers today relating to the end of the age and spreading the Gospel in the modern world.

The end of the age, Matthew 28:20. Age(s): A long, but indefinite, period of time, past or future. The ages, past and future, make up the whole of time. God is spoken of as existing and planning "before the ages" (1 Cor 2:7); He is the "King of ages" (1 Tm 1:17) and has a purpose that embraces the ages (Eph 3:11). The Bible speaks of what God will do at the close or consummation of the age(s) (Mt 13:39, 49). Taken from the Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible.

CREATE
**A NEW
STORY**



How has God changed your story during this six-week study? What new things is He asking you to do? What truth has transformed your heart? Think about specific steps you want to take to live a new story, to walk more closely with God so you can be part of His story and engaged in His kingdom.

- **In the video, Roger defined the term age as “a long, but indefinite period of time, past or future. The New Testament speaks of the contract between the present age (an evil age) and the age to come when in God’s judgment wrongs will be righted and his people will come into their full inheritance.” How are we to understand the age we are in?**
- **Given current technology, how can the Gospel be proclaimed throughout the whole world?**
- **What can you do to proclaim the gospel throughout the whole world?**
- **What is one thing you can do this week to proclaim the Gospel locally or globally?**

- Spend some time praying about those you know who might respond to a simple invitation: to come to a church service, to join your small group, or even just to have coffee and talk about spiritual matters. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind people you can pray for.
- Since this is the last meeting in this study, take some time to celebrate the work God has done in the lives of group members. Have each person in the group share some step of growth they have noticed in another member. (In other words, no one will talk about themselves. Instead, affirm others in the group.) Make sure each person gets affirmed and noticed and celebrated in some way.
- If your group still needs to make decisions about continuing to meet after this session, have that discussion now. Talk about what you will study, who will lead, and when you will meet.
- Review your Small Group Agreement on page 104 and evaluate how well you met your goals. Discuss any changes you want to make as you move forward. If you plan to continue to meet, and your group starts a new study, this is a great time to take on a new role or change roles of service in your group. What new role will you take on? If you are uncertain, maybe your group members have some ideas for you. Remember you aren't making a lifetime commitment to the new role; it will only be for a few weeks. Maybe someone would like to share a role with you if you don't feel ready to serve solo.
- Close by praying for your prayer requests and take a couple of minutes to review the praises you have recorded over the past five weeks on the Prayer and Praise Report on page 119. Spend some time thanking God for all He's done in your group during this study.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY ▶▶▶

If you feel God nudging you to go deeper, take some time before the next meeting to dig into His Word. Explore the Bible passages related to this session's theme on your own and jot your reflections in a journal or in this study guide. A great way to gain insight on a passage is to read it in several different translations. You may want to use a Bible app or website to compare translations.

▶ **READ ROMANS 11:25-27.**

- Why would God allow Israel to be hardened?
- How could this hardening of Israel make Gentile believers “wise in your own sight?”
- What does verse 27 imply?

▶ **READ MATTHEW 13:24-30, 36-43.**

- What would happen if the weeds were separated from the wheat before harvest? What implication does this have for living in today's culture?
- When will the weeds be removed?
- Who received the parable? Who received the explanation? What does this say about the disciples?

A woman with long dark hair is smiling and looking down at an open Bible. The Bible is resting on a dark surface, and another open book is visible in the foreground. The background is softly blurred.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

DAY 1

READ

1 CORINTHIANS 2:11-12.

For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.

Respond: How does the Spirit help you to understand the things of God?

DAY 2

READ 1 TIMOTHY 1:16

But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

Respond: How has God displayed his perfect patience toward you?

DAY 3

READ MARK 10:29-30

Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life."

Respond: How will your investment in God's Kingdom show benefits to you both now and in the age to come?

DAY 4

READ ROMANS 10:14

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

Respond: Who do you need to share the Gospel with? Pray about an opportunity to share.

DAY 5

READ ROMANS 10:15

And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

Respond: What can you do personally to send someone to share the good news with others?

DAY 6

Reflect on the verses from this past week, and use the following space to write any thoughts God has put in your heart and mind about the things we have looked at in this session and during your Daily Devotions time this week.