

# Lions for Ajax

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Lions for Ajax

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ISBN:

Print 978-1-63342-145-5

Mobi 978-1-63342-147-9

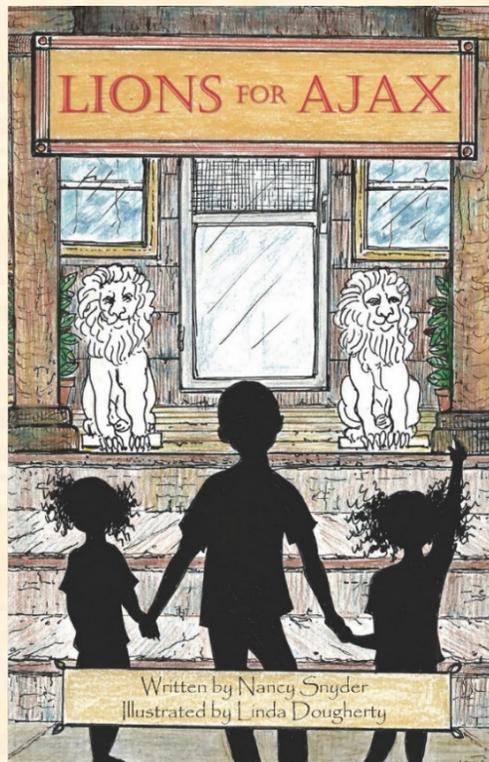
ePub 978-1-63342-146-2

Published by **Shepherd Press**

P.O. Box 24

Wapwallopen, Pennsylvania 18660

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# Chapter 1: Lions for Ajax

Pray, asking God to show you what he is like and how you can be like him.

## I. Read Genesis 1 and discuss the following questions:

### A. In this chapter, what did God do?

1. God took initiative to create the world (1:1).
2. Where there had been chaos, God made order (1:2–10). Where there had been darkness, God made light (1:2–3). God ordered space by separating the heavens, the seas, and the dry land (1:6–10). God ordered time by creating the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night (1:14–18).
3. God filled the space he had ordered (1:11–25).
4. God named some of the creations he did not specifically put under people’s dominion: day, night, heaven, earth, and seas (1:5, 8, 10).
5. God discerned what was good (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31).
6. God made a home for people, welcomed them to that home, and blessed them in that home (1:9–31).
7. God provided a banquet for his creatures (1:11–13, 29–30).
8. God created people—male and female—in his image (1:26–27).
9. God gave people dominion so they could reflect his image by ruling over creation (1:28).
10. God blessed the sea creatures, air creatures, and people, so they could be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth (1:22, 28).
11. God delighted in his creation (1:31).

### B. How did Stephen reflect God’s image when he made his arms a nest to catch Kylie?

1. As God made a home for people and welcomed them to that home (1:9–31), Stephen welcomed Kylie, making a tiny, temporary home for her in his arms (1:9–31).

### C. How did Lisa reflect God’s image?

1. As God discerned what was and was not good (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31), Lisa discerned that it was not good for Kylie to go on the porch of someone she didn’t know. She discerned that it was good to pray for the boys who were mean to Molly and Kylie

- D. In what ways did Matthew distort (rather than reflect) God's image?
1. He expressed contempt for people who are made in the image of God (1:27): toward Molly for her fear, toward the man who came out on his porch, and toward Alexander D. Goode for sacrificing his life.

**II. Read Hebrews 1:1–3 and discuss the following questions:**

- A. Who perfectly reflects the image of God?
1. God the Son (1:2–3).
- B. What does Christ do for sinners—those who distort God's image—who believe in him?
1. He purifies them from their sins (1:3).

**Pray**, thanking God that Jesus perfectly reflected God's image and died to purify sinners who have not perfectly reflected his image. Ask God to purify you and your children from sin and transform you to be like Jesus.

## Chapter 2: Polite in Three Languages

Pray, asking God to show you his design for you as men and women, and boys and girls.

### I. Read Genesis 2 and discuss the following questions:

- A. In this chapter, what did God do?
1. God dwelt with people in the temple-home he created (2:15–22; also Genesis 3:8).
  2. God revealed his design for people by establishing cycles of work and rest (2:2–3) and setting limits that provided an opportunity to love God more than his gifts (2:16–17).
  3. God made man from the ground and breathed life into him (2:7).
  4. God commanded the man to work and keep (guard or protect) the garden (2:15 ESV).
  5. God gave the man authority to name the animals (2:19–20).
  6. God discerned that it was not good for the man to be alone (2:18). He formed the woman from the man to be a helper suited to him (2:18, 21–22).
  7. God caused the man to give of his body to bring life to the woman. God produced life in the woman by causing her to receive from the man's body (2:21–22).
  8. God created marriage (2:24–25).
- B. God created the man, put him in the garden, and called him to work and keep it (2:5, 8, 15). What does this suggest about God's design for men?
1. Men are to reflect God's image through their work of tending and keeping creation.
- C. Before creating woman, God told the man how to guard the holiness of the garden where God would dwell with people (2:15–17). What does this, along with the rest of Scripture (such as Ephesians 5:25–28) suggest about God's design for men?
1. It suggests that men are designed to reflect God's image as they take responsibility for loving leadership.
- D. God created the woman and gave her a relationship by bringing her to the man to be his helper (2:22). What does this suggest about God's design for women?

1. It suggests that women are designed to reflect God's image by helping others through loving relationships.

**Review** the things God did in Genesis 1, then discuss the following questions:

- E. How did Joe and Lisa reflect God's image?
  1. Joe led the children (1:9–31) to better reflect God's image as they practiced loving and welcoming people.
  2. Joe and Lisa discerned which of the children's comments were good or not good (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31).

**II. Read Genesis 1:27–28, 2:18, and Genesis 3:1–21. Discuss the following questions:**

- A. When did God declare that something was not good?
  1. When man was alone before the creation of the woman (2:18).
- B. When did God declare that something was very good?
  1. After he created male and female (1:31). Males reflecting God's image as males and females reflecting God's image as females is a very good part of God's design.
- C. How did Eve fail in her calling as a woman?
  1. Instead of helping Adam through loving relationship (2:18), Eve led the way into sin (3:6). Eve insisted on grabbing what was not given—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (3:6)—instead of humbly and gratefully receiving what was given—all the other trees (2:16–17).<sup>1</sup>
- D. How did Adam fail in his calling as a man?
  1. Instead of protecting the woman and the holiness of the garden and leading the woman to obey God's instruction, Adam rebelled against God's design (3:6).
- E. What resulted from Eve's sin?
  1. Women have pain and difficulty in fulfilling God's call to help fill and subdue the earth through loving relationships in marriage and motherhood (1:28; 3:16).
- F. Although Lisa is a Christian, what difficulties does she face because of sin?

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<sup>1</sup> See "The Essence of Femininity" by Elisabeth Elliott, in *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood*, ed. by John Piper and Wayne Grudem.

1. She has pain as she labors to bring forth children who are like Christ.
- G. What resulted from Adam's listening to his wife and disobeying God's command (2:17)?
1. The ground is cursed (3:17). Men have pain and difficulty in fulfilling God's call in their work of tending, keeping, filling, and subduing the earth (1:28; 3:17–19).
- H. Although Joe is a Christian, what difficulties does he face because of sin?
1. He toils to root out thorns and thistles from the hearts of his children.
- I. How did God provide for Adam, Eve, and all who came after them?
1. He promised to send someone to defeat the enemy who had tried to destroy them (Genesis 3:15). At the right time, Christ defeated Satan by taking the curse sinners deserve, so believers can live under God's blessing (see Galatians 3:13–14). Those who believe in that Savior receive through him the fruit of the tree of life (Revelation 2:7).
  2. God killed an animal to make a covering for Adam and Eve (3:21).

**Pray,** asking God to restore each of you to his image.

## Chapter 3: Bullies Foiled

Pray, asking God to work in each of you to make you reflect God's image.

**I. Review God's calling for males (from Chapter 2 of the study guide). Discuss this question:**

- A. How did Ethan and Stephen carry out their calling as males?
  1. Ethan protected Ajax from being harmed by Stephen's forgetfulness (2:15).
  2. They protected Molly and Kylie from the bullies (2:15).

**II. Review God's actions in Genesis 1–2 and discuss the following questions:**

- A. How did Stephen reflect God's image?
  1. He took initiative (1:1) by stopping the bus, running to help the girls, and rebuking the bullies.
- B. How did Stephen and Ethan work together to reflect God's image?
  1. They took initiative (1:1) to lead Molly and Kylie home safely (2:16–17).
- C. After the sin described in Genesis 3, all people have distorted God's image and reflected lies about who God is. How did the bullies distort God's image?
  1. When God gave people dominion (1:28), they were to reflect his image as they ruled. The bullies tried to rule in a way that was contrary to God's wise and just dominion (Psalm 103:17–19). The bullies took initiative to impact people for evil instead of for good.
- D. How did Matthew reflect lies about who God is?
  1. He showed contempt toward people, as if God were not a good Creator and had not made those people in his image.

**III. Read Romans 5:12–21 and discuss the following questions:**

- A. According to this passage, why is Matthew so contemptuous toward people?
  1. Like every person since the sin of Adam and Eve, Matthew is a sinner. Contempt for others is one way Matthew expresses his sin.
- B. According to this verse, why do the bullies distort God's image?
  1. Like every person since the sin of Adam and Eve, these boys are

sinners who distort God’s image. Taking initiative to do evil and using their strength to hurt others are ways the bullies express their sin and distort God’s image.

- C. Why does this passage emphasize Adam, and sin entering the world through one *man* (instead of talking about Adam and Eve and sin entering the world through *them*)?
  - 1. Adam was to guard the garden and the woman. He was the head and the representative for all people (5:12, 14–19).
- D. What does Adam’s headship tell us about what it means to be a man?
  - 1. God created men to reflect his image through wise and loving leadership.
- E. How is Adam (and what people have under his headship) different from Christ (and what believers have under his headship)?

Results of Adam’s Sin	Results of Christ’s Obedience
5:12 Sin and death entered the world	
5:15 Death came to all	Grace overflows for many
5:16 Judgment and condemnation	Justification
5:14, 17 Death reigned	Those who receive grace & righteousness reign
5:18 Condemnation for all	Justification and life for all who believe
5:19 Many made sinners	Many made righteous
5:21 Sin reigned in death	Grace might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life

- F. Have you been made right with God by receiving Christ’s gifts of forgiveness, righteousness, and new life?

**Pray**, thanking God that Jesus did what Adam failed to do—obey God and perfectly reflect his image. Thank God that those who believe in Jesus can be transformed into God’s image.

## Chapter 4: Reeling in Matthew

Pray, asking God to expose sin so each of you will run to God to have the shame of sin covered.

### I. Read Genesis 3 and discuss the following questions:

- A. What did the man and the woman do after they sinned?
  - 1. They covered themselves (3:7).
  - 2. They hid from God (3:8–9)
  - 3. They blamed someone else (3:12–13).
- B. Why did the man and the woman cover themselves and hide?
  - 1. They felt afraid and exposed—a feeling we call shame (3:7–13).
- C. What did God do to cover them?
  - 1. He killed an animal to make clothing to cover them (3:21). This is the first hint that Jesus' blood shed on the Cross would cover the sin of those who believe in him (Romans 5:9) for "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Hebrews 9:22).
  - 2. He promised to send a Savior (3:15). As Scripture unfolds God's plan, it reveals a Savior who forgives the sins of those who trust him (see Ephesians 1:7).
- D. Why did Matthew feel like hiding?
  - 1. He felt ashamed when he saw his mom's sorrow over his sin.
- E. Why did Matthew feel "icky?"
  - 1. He felt ashamed when he saw Molly's sorrow over his selfishness.

### II. Read and discuss the following material:

In Ezekiel 16, God compares his people to an unwanted, abandoned child. God took initiative to care for her. He had compassion on her in her helplessness. Because God provided for her, she flourished (Ezekiel 16:6–7). God made a covenant to faithfully love her (Ezekiel 16:8) and provided a banquet for her (Ezekiel 16:13). He provided for her so richly that she became like his image: beautiful (Ezekiel 16:9–14).

Like Eve, however, this woman loved God's gifts more than she loved God (Ezekiel 16:15–26). God protected her by disciplining her (Ezekiel 16:27). God exposed her shame (Ezekiel 16:39, 57). But God remembered the promise he had made to her (Ezekiel 16:60). In his mercy, he caused her to see her sin and be ashamed (Ezekiel 16:61). As you recount this to your children, help them see that shame over sin can be a gift that causes sinners to run to God for the forgiving grace that covers shame.

**III. Read and discuss the following verses to understand what God has done to cover the shame of those who believe in him:**

**A. Hebrews 12:2.**

1. Christ endured the shame of the cross that sinners deserve.

**B. Colossians 2:13–15.**

1. People who have been made alive in Christ have all their sin forgiven. As promised in Genesis 3:15, Christ has triumphed over Satan. Satan, rather than the forgiven sinner, is put to shame.

**C. 2 Corinthians 3:18.**

1. As Christians behold Christ's glory, they are changed to be glorious like him. Their shame is covered with his glory.

**Pray,** thanking God that Christ covers the shame of those who believe in him. Ask God to help the children see Christ's image in his Word and be transformed into that glorious image.

## Chapter 5: Gotcha Day

Pray, thanking God that he adopts believers into his family and conforms them to his image.

### I. Review the things God did in Genesis 1–3, then discuss the following questions:

- A. How did Ethan reflect God's image?
  - 1. When Molly was at the back door wanting to get inside, Ethan discerned what was not good (2:18) and took initiative (1:1) to make it good (2:18).
- B. How did Joe reflect God's image?
  - 1. As God welcomed people to the home he had made (1:9–31) and delighted in his creation (1:31–2:3), Joe welcomed Molly to his home and delighted in her (see also Zephaniah 3:17).
  - 2. Joe provided gifts for his family (2:15, 21).
- C. How did Joe, Lisa, and Matthew reflect God's image?
  - 1. As God provided a banquet for people (1:29–30), they provided a special meal for the family.
- D. How did Joe and Lisa reflect God's image?
  - 1. They ordered time (1:14–18) by setting apart an hour for a celebratory meal. They ordered space (1:6–10) by overseeing the arrangement of the dining and living rooms for that celebration and filling the rooms with balloons and gifts (1:11–25).
- E. How did Ajax reflect God's image?
  - 1. He noticed Molly's hurt and took initiative (1:1) to comfort her by letting her play with his new toucan.
- F. How did Stephen reflect God's image as a male?
  - 1. He led Matthew (2:16–17) to better reflect God's image by loving Molly and Kylie.

### II. Read Ephesians 1:3–6 and discuss the following question:

- A. How does God make people his children?
  - 1. He adopts them (1:5).
- B. Ephesians explains the riches God's children have in their inheritance.

How many gifts that God gives to his children can you find in these few verses?

1. God chose them that they should be holy (1:4–5).
  2. God predestined them to be adopted through Christ (1:5).
  3. God showers them with grace (1:6).
  4. God redeems them—purchasing them and freeing them from slavery to sin (1:7).
  5. God forgives their sins (1:7).
  6. God gives them the Holy Spirit (1:13).
- C. Who decided to give people those gifts?
1. God. The giver decides what and how to give.
- D. Why did Joe take the doll from Kylie?
1. She was not following the giver’s design in the way she used the gift.
- E. Why do you think Joe and Lisa did not force Matthew to give Molly and Kylie balloons, even though they bought the balloons and have authority to make Matthew do the loving thing?
1. They wanted Matthew to reflect God’s image by giving good gifts; the giver decides what and how to give.

**III. Read Romans 1:21 and discuss the following questions:**

- A. How do people who receive gifts honor those who give gifts?
1. They honor the giver by giving thanks (1:21).
- B. How should we respond to God for every gift he chooses to give us?
1. By receiving the gift with gratitude (even if it is a gift we would not have chosen).
- C. How did Matthew dishonor his parents?
1. He was not grateful for the gift they gave him.

**Pray**, thanking God for his gifts. Ask him to help you use those gifts according to his design.

## Chapter 6: Thanks for the Tickets

Pray, asking God to help each of you follow his design for your lives.

### I. Review the things God did in Genesis 1–2, then discuss the following questions:

- A. How did Joe, Lisa, Missy, Molly, and Kylie reflect God's image?
  - 1. As God named the day, night, heaven, earth, and seas (1:5, 8, 10), Joe, Lisa, and Missy named the children God entrusted to their care and authority. Molly and Kylie named the dolls Joe and Lisa gave them (1:5, 8, 10).
- B. How did Joe and Lisa reflect God's image?
  - 1. As God designed cycles of work and rest for his people (2:2–3), Joe and Lisa designed cycles of work and rest for their children, along with routines to help them enter that rest.

### II. Read Romans 13:7. Discuss the following question:

- A. How did Matthew honor God?
  - 1. When he thanked his parents for the gift, Matthew honored God by gratefully honoring his parents (see Ephesians 6:1–2).

### III. Read Isaiah 43:7 and discuss the following question:

- A. Why did God create people?
  - 1. God created people for his glory.

### IV. Read Genesis 1:26–27. Discuss the following questions:

- A. How did God create people?
  - 1. God created people in his image. Combining this with Isaiah 43:7, we see that God created people to reflect his image for his glory.
  - 2. God created people as male and female. Combining this with Isaiah 43:7, we see that God created people as male and female in his image and for his glory.
- B. What did God say about creating people male and female in his image for his glory?
  - 1. He said it was very good. We see that it is very good for males to live as boys and men. We see that it is very good for females to live as girls and women.

**V. Read Genesis 2:18–25 and discuss the following questions:**

- A. Why did God create the woman?  
God created the woman to be a suitable helper (2:18).
- B. How do men and women who marry reflect the image of God?
  - 1. When a man and a woman make and keep a covenant to be faithful to one another (2:24), they are reflecting the image of the covenant-making and covenant-keeping God. (For more on God as a covenant maker and keeper, see Isaiah 54:10.)

**VI. Read Ephesians 5:22–32 and discuss the following questions:**

- A. Why did God create marriage?
  - 1. God created marriage to give us a picture of the church's union with Christ (5:32). Combining this with Isaiah 43:7 and Genesis 2:18–25, we see that when one man, who glorifies God by living as a man made in God's image, and one woman, who glorifies God by living as a woman made in God's image, unite in a marriage covenant, their marriage glorifies God as a picture of Christ and the church. God makes a covenant (a promise he is bound to keep) to be God to his people. When a man and woman make and keep a covenant in marriage, they reflect God's image.
- B. How do men glorify God (display the great things about God) and reflect the image of Christ in their marriages?
  - 1. Husbands take initiative in loving their wives and giving up their lives for them, as Christ took initiative in loving the church and giving up his life for the church (5:25).
  - 2. Husbands lead by tending and protecting their wives' holiness as Christ led by providing for the holiness of the church (5:23, 25–30).
  - 3. Husbands nourish and cherish their wives as Christ nourishes and cherishes the church (5:23, 29 ESV).
  - 4. As God keeps covenant with his people, husbands faithfully keep covenant with their wives (5:31)
- C. How do women glorify God in their marriages?
  - 1. Wives respectfully submit to their husbands' leadership, as the church respectfully submits to Christ's leadership (5:22, 33).

**Pray,** thanking God that Christ loves the church as his bride.

## Chapter 7: Cockroach or Superhero?

Pray, asking God to help each of you become like Christ by living happily under God's authority.

### I. Review Genesis 1–3 by discussing the following:

- A. In the garden of Eden, the man and the woman were under God's dominion (2:16–17). The man was responsible to work and protect the garden (2:15); the woman was responsible to help the man in that work (2:18). Together, the man and the woman had dominion over the creatures (1:26).
- B. In Genesis 3:1–6, whose word did the woman obey?
  - 1. The woman obeyed a creature, putting herself under its dominion, rather than exercising God-honoring and loving dominion over it.
- C. In Genesis 3:1–6, whose leadership did the man follow?
  - 1. The man obeyed the woman, putting himself under her dominion, rather than exercising God-honoring, loving authority to tend and protect her.
- D. All the heartache of sin resulted from these acts of rebellion against the beauty of the loving authority relationships that God established at creation. Are there areas in which you are not living happily under God's authority?

### II. Read Colossians 1:9–23 and discuss the following questions:

- A. How can Christ, who perfectly reflects the image of God (1:15), restore the image of God (1:22) in people so they bear fruit (1:10) according to God's design for men and women at creation?
  - 1. People who believe in Christ have their sins forgiven (1:14), are reconciled to God (1:22), and are empowered by God to do good (1:9–11).
- B. Why does God have the authority to tell people what to do?
  - 1. He created people (1:16), and creators have the right to do with their creations what they choose.
  - 2. People were created for him so owe him joyful obedience (1:16).

### III. Read Genesis 1:27–28, Genesis 2:18, and Proverbs 31:25–26. Discuss the following question:

- A. How did Lisa glorify God?
  - 1. Lisa combined strength and the wise teaching of kindness (Proverbs 31:25, 26) as she followed her God-given call to be fruitful and exercise dominion (Genesis 1:27–28) as a helper (Genesis 2:18). She showed the boys they were distorting what God made them for: reflecting God’s image as males.

**IV. Read Titus 2:3–5 and discuss the following question:**

- A. Why are women to be reverent, self-controlled, pure, and diligent in their homes? If women are married, why are they to love and submit to their husbands? If women are mothers, why are they to love their children?
  - 1. So people won’t say evil, untrue things about God’s Word. When women follow God’s design for them as women, they honor God and reflect his glory.

**V. Review Genesis 2:15–25 and discuss the following question:**

- A. How did Ajax and Ethan glorify God as males?
  - 1. They suggested ways of protecting the girls.
- B. How did Cody and Brandon distort the image of God by the way they acted as males?
  - 1. They took initiative to do evil, rather than to do good (see also 2 Chronicles 16:9).
  - 2. They used their strength to hurt, rather than to help (see also Colossians 1:22).

**VI. Read Titus 2:2, 6–8 and discuss the following question:**

- A. Why are men to be “sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness”?
  - 1. So shame is not cast on the gospel, but is cast on the opponents of the gospel who can find in Christian behavior no reason for rejecting Christ (2:8). When men follow God’s design for them as men, they honor God and reflect his glory.

**Pray**, thanking God that Jesus perfectly submitted to God’s authority. Ask God to bring each of you happily under God’s authority.

## Chapter 8: Backward and Forward

Pray, asking God to shine his light in your hearts through his Word.

### I. Read Genesis 10:25 and discuss the following question:

- A. What does this verse say about the meaning of many names during Bible times?
  - 1. Names often described the circumstances surrounding the person being named. (See also Genesis 16:11, 17:5, 25:25–30, 29:32–35, and 30:6–24.)

### II. Read Genesis 1:26–28 and 2:5–8, 15, and 20. Discuss the following question:

- A. In Hebrew, the language in which the book of Genesis was first written, the word for the ground God used to make Adam is “adamah.” This would be like saying in English, “God made Eart from the earth,” or “God made Grou from the ground.” What does this suggest about God’s design for men?
  - 1. It suggests that God designed men for the work of tending, keeping, and exercising dominion over the earth (Genesis 2:5–8, 15).
- B. Adam was both the name of the first man and the Hebrew word for mankind (the human race—male and female). What does this suggest about God’s design for Adam?
  - 1. It suggests that Adam represented all people; the rest of Scripture confirms this. (See Romans 5:12–21, for example.) Adam represented all people as the head of God’s covenant with people. The first man bore responsibility for the covenant stipulation of keeping and protecting the earth as a holy place where God would dwell with people. The first man bore the responsibility for the covenant stipulation of being fruitful and exercising dominion over the earth.

### III. Read Genesis 2:18–27 and Genesis 3:15 and 20. Discuss the following questions:

- A. What might it mean that God names the man, but Adam names the woman?
  - 1. Adam’s naming the woman may show that he had authority or responsibility to lovingly lead her (Genesis 3:20).
- B. What does the name Adam chose for the woman mean (Genesis 3:20)?

1. By giving the woman a name meaning “life-giver,”<sup>2</sup> Adam showed his hope that Eve’s offspring would crush the head of the serpent (3:15; to see how Christ defeated the serpent, read Colossians 2:15).

**IV. Read 2 Corinthians 3:18. Discuss the following question:**

- A. Joe told Ajax that God shines his light into our hearts. How can sinful boys, girls, men, and women have God’s light shine in their hearts so they can be changed to reflect Christ’s glorious image?

1. By continuing to gaze at the Lord’s glory (3:18).

**V. Read Luke 24:27 and discuss the following question:**

- A. To whom do the Scriptures point?

1. Christ (24:27).

- B. Since the Scriptures show us Christ, what can we do to see the Lord’s glory?

1. Read the Bible. Listen as Christ is preached during worship. Think about Christ while singing his praise.

**VI. Read 2 Corinthians 3:18 and discuss the following question:**

- A. Who transforms us into Christ’s glorious image as we behold the Lord’s glory?

1. The Holy Spirit (3:18).

**VII. Read John 1:1–5 and discuss the following questions:**

- A. Who is the light that gives life?

1. The Word: God the Son (1:4; see also John 8:12).

- B. Which is stronger—the light or the darkness?

1. The light is stronger because, when it shines, it overpowers the darkness (1:5).

**VIII. Read Matthew 7:24–27. Discuss the following questions and relate them to the name Joe and Lisa chose for Matthew because of their desire for him to build his life on the rock of Jesus:**

- A. When God said, “Let there be light,” did the light obey God? When God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters,” did the heavens obey God?

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<sup>2</sup> *English Standard Version Study Bible*, page 57

1. Yes (Genesis 1:3, 7).
- B. When God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear,” did the seas and earth obey God? When God said, “Let the land sprout vegetation,” did the plants obey God?
1. Yes (Genesis 1:9, 11–12)
- C. When God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night,” did the sun, moon, and stars obey God? When God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth,” did the creatures of the sea and the air obey God?
1. Yes (Genesis 1:15–18, 24).
- D. God created male and female for his glory. Will you obey God by living out what he created you to be—male or female—for his glory?
- E. How can Matthew build his life on the rock of Christ?
1. Live happily under his authority (7:24).
  2. Live according to God’s design in creating him male (7:24).

**Pray** that each of you would obey God by living according to his design as you build your lives on the rock of Christ.

## Chapter 9: A Thirteen-Pencil Day

Pray, asking God to make each of you reflect his glorious image as male and female.

### I. Read Genesis 1–3 and discuss the following questions:

- A. In Genesis 1:2, how was the earth described?
  - 1. Dark, empty, and formless.
- B. By the end of Genesis 1, what was the world like?
  - 1. It had a restful order of sunlit days and starlit darkness. It was teeming with life and charged with glory. God had created a perfect home where the man and woman could reflect his glory by exercising dominion over creation.
- C. After God so beautifully ordered space and time according to his perfect design (Genesis 1–2), what changes resulted from Adam and Eve’s sin?
  - 1. Their relationship with God became disordered: Adam and Eve hid from God.
  - 2. Their relationship with each other became disordered: Adam blamed Eve.
  - 3. Their relationship with creation became disordered: Eve blamed the serpent; there was enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; the ground was cursed.
  - 4. They would suffer as they tried to fulfill their callings: Eve would have pain in childbearing and marriage; Adam would have pain and toil in tending and keeping the earth.
  - 5. Death disrupted and disordered all the good things God had made.
- D. What did Joe do to reflect God’s image?
  - 1. Joe brought order out of chaos in the kitchen and schoolroom (1:2–18).
  - 2. Joe protected Kylie by making her a safe little home for the night (2:15).
- E. Matthew was worrying about what he needed. Instead of worrying, how *should* we respond to God who so generously provides for us in the world he made?
  - 1. We should trust such a generous provider (1:29–30; see also Matthew 6:25–33).

2. We should thank such a generous giver and Savior (3:15; see also James 1:17–18.)
3. We should follow the design of such a generous giver (1:26–31).

**II. Review the previous lessons of this study guide by discussing the following questions:**

- A. How *can* we respond to God with trust, gratitude, and obedience?
1. By believing that Jesus has purified us from our sins and living purified lives (Hebrews 1:3, from Chapter 1 of this study guide).
  2. By believing that God the Son defeated Satan and living free from Satan’s power (Genesis 3:15, from Chapter 2).
  3. By believing that the grace that rules our lives fuels obedience and living as those who reign through righteousness (Romans 5:12–21, from Chapter 3).
  4. By believing that Christ has covered us with his glory, seeing his glory in his Word, and being changed into his glorious likeness (2 Corinthians 3:18, from Chapter 4).
  5. By believing that God has adopted us, chosen us for holiness, freed us from sin, and given us the Holy Spirit, and living holy lives by the Spirit’s power (Ephesians 1:3–6, from Chapter 5).
  6. By believing that Christ loves the church as his bride and living as his pure bride (review from Ephesians 5:22–32, from Chapter 6).
  7. By believing that Christ, who perfectly reflected the image of God, has power to restore the image of God in us, and living out that new image as we continue in the hope of the gospel (Colossians 1:9–23, from Chapter 7).
  8. By believing that the Holy Spirit transforms us into God’s image and living transformed lives (2 Corinthians 3:18, from Chapters 4 and 8).

**III. Read 1 Timothy 2:9–10 and discuss the following questions:**

- A. What did Lisa do to reflect God’s glorious image as a woman?
1. Lisa adorned herself with good works by responding to Missy and Molly’s needs.
- B. Because she has authority over Matthew, Lisa could have told Matthew to give Molly a shirt. Why do you think she did not do so?
1. Lisa wants to help Matthew (Genesis 2:18) know and trust God as the generous giver of all good gifts, so he can reflect God’s image by

giving generously. Lisa wants Matthew to understand that the giver decides what to give. So, she wants Matthew to decide what to give Molly.

**Pray**, thanking God that he is such a generous giver. Ask God to help each of you respond to him with trust, gratitude, worship, and obedience.

## Chapter 10: Best Bits

Pray, asking God to help each of you use all his gifts the way he intends.

### I. Read Genesis 2:4–23 and discuss the following questions:

- A. In verse 5, what does God say is lacking?
  - 1. There are no plants and no man to work the ground.
- B. Where did God put the man he had created?
  - 1. In the garden (2:8).
- C. What was one of God's purposes for putting the man in the garden?
  - 1. God put the man in the garden to work and keep (or protect) it (2:15).
- D. Whom did God instruct to eat from any tree except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?
  - 1. The man (2:16–17).
- E. How did Joe reflect God's image?
  - 1. As God provided food for the people he created (2:16), Joe provided food for his family.
  - 2. Joe took initiative (Genesis 1:1) to give Ajax the player he needed for his stuffed animal football team.
- F. How did Joe glorify God as a man?
  - 1. As Adam received instruction from God that he was to pass on to others (2:16–17), Joe taught his family to know God through his Word.
  - 2. Joe took initiative to love Matthew when Matthew felt angry and ashamed. In this way, Joe was tending the garden of Matthew's heart (2:15).
- G. How did Ajax reflect God's image as a boy who is growing into a man?
  - 1. As Adam gave part of himself for the woman (2:22), Ajax gave of himself for Molly.
  - 2. As God turned dark chaos into a beautiful garden (Genesis 1), Ajax turned the frightening hospital room into a safe and joyful place for Molly.
- H. How did Molly honor the giver of her gift?
  - 1. By enjoying the gift and using it as the giver intended.

- I. How did Lisa glorify God as a woman?
  1. Lisa worked through her relationships to help people (2:18). She brought Molly's problem to her family. She responded to Ajax's initiative. She enjoyed and affirmed Ajax for the way he glorified God as a boy growing into a man.
  2. Lisa helped Ajax (2:18) when he felt lonely and bored by pointing him back to the joy of giving himself to love others.

**Pray**, thanking God that he gives such good gifts and asking him to help you glorify him by using those gifts according to his good design.

# Chapter 11: Milk and Miracles

Pray, asking God to teach each of you to use the bodies God has given you to glorify God.

## I. Read Acts 17:26–27 and discuss the following questions:

- A. As God planned where Ajax would grow up, God also planned the details of our lives to work toward a goal. What is that goal?
  - 1. God created people and put them in particular times, places, and cultural groups, so they would seek him and find him.
  - 2. How can you better know God as you submit to his design for your life?

## II. Read Genesis 1 and discuss the following questions:

- A. How are people different from everything else in God’s creation?
  - 1. They are made in the image of God (1:26–27).
- B. How can people show God’s image in ways that sunsets and stars cannot (1:3–5, 14–18)?
  - 1. People can reflect God’s image by using materials God has made to create things (Genesis 1:1), but sunsets and stars cannot. (See Exodus 35:30–35.)
- C. How can people show God’s image in ways that cliffs and lagoons cannot (1:9–10)?
  - 1. People can know God (Genesis 2), but the land and sea cannot. (See John 17:3.)
- D. How can people show God’s image in ways that cherry trees and roses cannot (1:11–12)?
  - 1. People can show God is loving as they live in loving relationships, but plants cannot (Genesis 2; see also John 15:9–15).
- E. How can people show God’s image in ways that otters and cheetahs cannot (1:24–25)?
  - 1. People can show that God is a wise ruler as they wisely exercise dominion over creation (1:26; see also Psalm 8) in ways animals cannot.

## III. Read Genesis 1:27 and Romans 8:6–26 and discuss the following questions:

- A. What is the reason the Bible gives for Matthew’s dislike of being male?

1. Since Adam sinned, the earth has been under a curse (Genesis 3:17–19; Romans 8:20–22). Sometimes the corruption of creation results in natural disasters or illnesses. Sometimes the corruption of creation results in people being uncomfortable in the bodies God has given them.
- B. How can Matthew live joyfully in the body God has given him?
1. By faith, Matthew can have God's Holy Spirit living in him (Romans 8:9). By faith, Matthew can set his mind on the Spirit, have life and peace, submit to God's law, and please God (Romans 8:6–8).
  2. Matthew can believe that he does not have to follow his flesh, but is free to follow the Spirit and put to death rebellion against God's good design (Romans 8:12–13).
  3. Matthew can be led by God's Spirit (Romans 8:14). He can cry out to God and live joyfully as God's son (Romans 8:15).
  4. He can glorify God as the giver of good gifts by gratefully receiving the gift of his masculinity instead of resisting God's gift (Genesis 1:27).
- C. Which part of his inheritance (Romans 8:17) does Joe tell Matthew about?
1. Joe tells Matthew that he will receive a new body. (See 1 Corinthians 15:50–53.)
- D. What is Matthew to do now so that he will later receive that inheritance and be glorified with Christ?
1. Be willing to suffer by living in the body God has given him (Romans 8:17–18).
  2. With patience and hope, wait for his body to be redeemed (Romans 8:23–25).
  3. Believe that God's Holy Spirit can help him in his weakness and remember that the Holy Spirit is praying for him (Romans 8:26–27).

**IV. Read Galatians 2:20 and discuss the following question:**

- A. How does this verse apply to Matthew?
1. Matthew can believe, "I (and my sin of not being content to follow God's design) have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I (and my sin of not being content to follow God's design) who live, but Christ (and his delight in honoring God in his body) who lives in me." (Parentheses added.)

- B. How does this verse apply to each of you? How can each of you personalize this verse?

**Pray**, thanking God that Jesus died so those who believe in him can joyfully honor him in their bodies now and perfectly enjoy him in their new bodies forever.

## Chapter 12: A Crack in the Concrete

Pray, asking God to help you use the gift of your bodies to honor him.

### I. Read Luke 12:6–9 and discuss the following questions:

- A. Even though sparrows were of such little value that five of them were sold for two pennies, what does Jesus say about them?
  - 1. God notices and remembers them (12:6).
- B. Although a strand of hair is of little value, what does Jesus say about the hairs on your head?
  - 1. God knows how many strands of hair you have (12:7).
- C. What is Jesus' point?
  - 1. Since a sparrow or strand of hair cannot fall to the ground apart from God's care, you can trust God to care for you (12:7).
- D. What does this mean for Matthew's life? What does it mean for your life?
  - 1. Matthew can trust God's good design and grow into the man God created him to be.

### II. Read Luke 12:22–34 and discuss the following questions:

- A. Because of sin, people no longer live in the perfect and protected garden home God first created. But God did protect Matthew and prepare a home for him. How?
  - 1. God preserved Matthew's life when he was an abandoned baby. God brought him to a family who had prepared a home for him.
- B. How can Matthew treasure God's kingdom? How can you treasure God's kingdom?
  - 1. Matthew can be grateful for receiving God's kingdom (12:32). Believing he is joined with Christ (Galatians 2:20), Matthew can treasure God's kingdom more than he treasures his sense of comfort and safety by living contentedly in the body the King has given him (12:34).

### III. Read Genesis 3:6 and 1 John 2:12–17. Discuss the following question:

- A. Matthew said he felt something missing (page 83). Instead of being grateful for what God provided, Adam and Eve grabbed for what they felt they were missing (Genesis 3:6). How can Matthew, unlike Adam

and Eve, be content with what God has provided for him?

1. As Matthew attends to God's Word (1 John 2:14), he can become strong (1 John 2:14) in the knowledge of God (1 John 2:13–14) and overcome the evil one (1 John 2:14), who tempted Adam and Eve.

**IV. Read Genesis 1:26–27 and 2:18–23. Discuss the following questions:**

A. When Adam saw the woman, did he talk about something being taken from him (his rib) or something being given to him?

1. Adam overflowed with gratitude for what God had given to him (2:23).

B. How and why was the woman like the man?

1. Because she was taken from the man, she was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh (2:23). The woman was like the man so she could be a helper suited to him (2:18).

C. The woman was also different from the man. Why?

1. They were different so she could be a helper suited to him, and so they could glorify God as male and female (1:27).

**V. Read Hebrews 2:14–18 and 4:15. Discuss the following questions:**

A. How was Jesus like us? How was Jesus different from us?

1. Jesus became human so he could die (2:14), but if he were not God (different from us), he could not have defeated death and Satan for us (Colossians 2:13–15; 1 John 3:8).
2. Jesus became like us so he could accept the wrath and punishment we deserve (2:17). He was different from us so he could turn God's wrath away from us (1 John 4:10).
3. Jesus became like us so he could understand and help us with our temptation; he was different from us because he never sinned (2:18 and 4:15).

**Pray,** thanking God that Jesus became bone of our bones and flesh of our flesh so he could save us. Ask God to help you honor him as King and provider.

## Chapter 13: Plunge Right In

Pray, asking God to shape you into the image of Christ.

### I. Read Genesis 2:21–23 and discuss the following questions:

- A. What was the result of God’s “surgery” while the man slept?
  - 1. The man gave part of himself to produce life. (2:21).
- B. What does this suggest about God’s design for men?
  - 1. It suggests that men are to give of themselves to bring life to others.

### II. Read Genesis 1:28 and 2:15.

- A. In what ways did Ajax glorify God as a boy who is growing into a man?
  - 1. Ajax took initiative to solve a problem. He tried to tend the home and keep it (2:15). He tried to exercise dominion (1:28). He gave himself in an effort to bring order out of chaos. He tried to protect his mother from becoming upset. He persevered in the face of the thorns that have frustrated man’s work ever since the Fall.
- B. In what ways did Joe glorify God as a man?
  - 1. Joe gave himself to bring life to his family as they worked to bring order out of chaos. Joe exercised dominion by making a plan to search for Matthew. Joe took initiative to lead the family in prayer.

### III. Read 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45–49 and discuss the following questions:

- A. Who is “the last Adam”?
  - 1. Christ (15:22).
- B. God caused the first Adam to give part of his body to give life to Eve. What does the last Adam give of his body to provide for those who are spiritually dead because of sin?
  - 1. Life and restoration to his image (15:45, 49).
- C. How does each of you bear the image of Adam, the man of dust?
- D. Are you being remade in the image of Christ, the man of heaven?

Pray, thanking God that Jesus is a life-giving spirit (1 Corinthians 15:45) who has power to restore people to his image (Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18). Ask God to remake each of you so you become more like Christ, the man of heaven.

## Chapter 14: Molly Speaks

Pray, asking God to help you glorify him by living happily under his authority.

### I. Read 1 Corinthians 16:13–14 and discuss the following question:

- A. How did Matthew glorify God as a male?
  1. Matthew courageously and lovingly tried to protect Molly and Kylie by going with them. Matthew *gave* of himself to protect the girls.

### II. Read Genesis 3:1–6 and discuss the following questions:

- A. What did Matthew, Molly, and Kylie do that was wrong?
  1. When they went somewhere without their parents' permission, they were disobeying their parents and God. They were not living happily and safely under authority.
  2. Even though Molly and Kylie wanted the lions so they could give them to Ajax, they acted like Eve by wanting something they did not have and being willing to disobey in order to get it. As Adam did not protect Eve by preventing her from disobeying, Matthew did not protect Molly and Kylie by trying to prevent their disobedience.
  3. Matthew took his father's cell phone without permission.
- B. What could Molly and Kylie have done instead of disobeying?
  1. As Eve could have talked to Adam or God instead of disobeying, Molly and Kylie could have discussed their desire with their mom, their grandmother, Joe, or Lisa.

### III. Read Genesis 3:8–13 and discuss the following questions:

- A. How did Matthew act like Adam?
  1. Instead of admitting what he did wrong, Matthew blamed Molly and Kylie.
- B. How did Kylie act like Eve?
  1. Instead of admitting what she did was wrong, Kylie blamed Molly and Ajax.

### IV. Read Genesis 3:14–24 and discuss the following questions:

- A. How did Joe reflect God's image?
  1. Joe tried to protect the children by giving them consequences for their disobedience.

- B. Was it mean or loving for Joe to discipline Matthew, Molly, and Kylie for what they did wrong?
  - 1. It was loving because, when the children disobeyed, they put themselves in danger.
- C. Is there an area of disobedience in your life that is putting you in danger?

**V. Read Isaiah 53:4–7 and discuss the following question:**

- A. As Kylie, Molly, and Matthew endangered themselves through disobedience, Adam and Eve put themselves in danger by disobeying God. Jesus, however, put himself in the most dangerous place even though he had never sinned. How did Jesus put himself in the most dangerous place?
  - 1. By taking on the sin of those who believe in him (53:4–5), Jesus put himself under God’s wrath—God’s just anger toward sinners (53:4).
- B. Why did Jesus put himself in the most dangerous place?
  - 1. Jesus put himself under God’s wrath so those who believe in him could have peace with God (53:5).

**Pray**, thanking God that Jesus put himself in the most dangerous place so Christians could have peace with God. Ask God to help each of you live in that peace by obeying God’s authority.

## Chapter 15: Even Matthew Had the Sense

**Pray**, asking God to use the circumstances of your lives to help you better know him and glorify him.

**I. Read 1 Peter 3:1–6 and discuss the following question:**

A. How did Lisa honor God in her role as a wife?

1. Even though Lisa wanted to meet the Lion Man, she respectfully submitted to Joe's leadership when he decided to go instead.

**II. Read 1 Corinthians 16:13–14 and discuss the following question:**

A. How did Joe reflect God's image and glorify him?

1. Joe gave of himself by doing something uncomfortable in order to love and protect Lisa and Matthew.

**III. Review Genesis 1 and discuss the following question:**

A. How did Gus reflect God's image and glorify him?

1. Gus created little worlds that showed his wisdom, skill, and delight.

**IV. Read Luke 11:11–13 and Isaiah 49:15. Discuss the following question:**

A. Gus said his father had to leave in order to provide for his family. Molly said she couldn't even remember when her father left. In what ways is God better than earthly parents?

1. Earthly parents cannot always be with their children. Some earthly parents forget and neglect their children, but God will never forget his people. Some earthly parents do not give good things to their children, but God always gives good gifts (Luke 11:11–13). God gives his children the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a wonderful gift because God lives in believers and gives them power by his Holy Spirit.

**Pray**, thanking God that he has created the world and placed each of you exactly where he wants you to be in his world. Ask God to help each of you seek and find him through your difficult circumstances.

## Chapter 16: The Lighthouse

Pray, asking God to teach you to trust him.

### I. Read Romans 8:18–39 and discuss the following questions:

- A. During their day at the ocean, the children reveled in God’s beauty as they saw it reflected in creation. They also saw a lighthouse that was designed to protect sailors on stormy seas. What does this show about creation?
1. Creation shows us the beauty, wisdom, power, and creativity of God. Since the sin of Adam and Eve, however, creation has been “subjected to futility” and is in “bondage to corruption” (8:20–21). This explains the destruction that comes from things such as hurricanes, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. Creation, which was made to be a blessing to people, sometimes brings destruction because of its frustration and decay.
- B. Because creation has been “subjected to futility” and is in “bondage to corruption,” there are frightening circumstances in this world. What truths does Romans 8:18–39 explain that allow God’s children to live free from fear?
1. What we suffer now is not worth comparing with the glory we will receive later (8:18).
  2. God will redeem our bodies (8:23) so we needn’t fear things that could happen to our bodies now.
  3. Jesus and the Spirit help us by praying for us (8:26–27, 34).
  4. Everything works together for God’s children to become like Christ, so we do not need to fear difficult circumstances but can trust that God will use them to make us more like Christ (8:28–29).
  5. Since God is for those who believe in Christ, believers do not need to fear anyone (8:31, 33–34).
  6. Since God has given us the gift of Christ, we should not fear that he won’t give us what we need (8:32).
  7. No hardship can separate us from the great love the triune God has for us (8:35, 39).
  8. We are conquerors through Christ (8:37).

### II. Read Psalm 145:13 and Genesis 1:27–28. Discuss the following questions:

- A. Who has everlasting dominion over all things?
    - 1. God (Psalm 145:13).
  - B. To whom did God give dominion (as vice-regents under his dominion)?
    - 1. Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:27–28).
  - C. Why did God give dominion to Adam and Eve?
    - 1. So they could reflect his image for his glory (Genesis 1:27–28).
- III. Explain that when Adam and Eve sinned, they put themselves under the dominion of sin (John 8:34), and Satan (Ephesians 2:1–2). Read Romans 6:12–14, Romans 8:29, 37–38, and Ephesians 6:10–12. Discuss the following question:**
- A. Who can work in partnership with Christ to exercise dominion over sin and Satan?
    - 1. Those who are being conformed to the likeness of Christ (Romans 8:29) exercise authority over sin (Romans 6:14) and Satan (Ephesians 6:10–12) because they are joined with the conquering Christ (Romans 8:37–39).
- IV. Read Genesis 1:27–28 and Matthew 28:18–20. Discuss the following questions:**
- A. The first husband, and the wife God created for him, failed to exercise dominion for the glory of God. Who does exercise dominion for the glory of God?
    - 1. Christ, the second Adam (review from 1 Corinthians 15:50–53, discussed in Chapter 11 of this study guide), and the bride God gives him—the church (review from Ephesians 5:31–32, discussed in Chapter 6)—exercise dominion for the glory of God. Because all authority has been given to Christ (Matthew 28:18–20), his bride makes disciples (Matthew 28:18–20)—fruitfully multiplying and filling the earth with renewed images of God. (See also Ephesians 1:20–23, which says Christ has dominion, and Ephesians 2:4–7, which says the church is seated with Christ in his place of dominion.)
    - 2. Discuss ways each of you can work in partnership with Christ to exercise dominion.

**Pray,** asking God to help you exercise dominion over sin and live joyfully under his dominion.

# Chapter 17: Light in the Dark

Pray, asking God to help you do everything for his glory.

## I. Review Genesis 1:26–27 and 2:18–23. Discuss the following points:

- A. A complement may fit with something else to complete it. Complementary angles, for example, fit together to make a perfect right angle. A complement may fit with something else to make it more beautiful. Complementary colors are opposite each other when arranged in a circle of graded tones; the complementary colors enhance beauty. Matthew's sculptures complement each other, fitting together so each sculpture enhances the beauty of the other.
- B. Men glorify God as men. Women glorify God as women. God designed men and women to fit together to reflect God's image for his glory. Men and women are complementary reflections of God's image.
- C. One way people glorify God is by living contentedly in the bodies God has given them—having their thoughts transformed according to God's perfect will (see Romans 12:1–2). Males glorify God by living wholeheartedly as males (see 1 Corinthians 16:15). Females glorify God by living wholeheartedly as females (see 1 Timothy 2:9–11).

## II. Read Colossians 2:6–7 and 3:1–25 and discuss the following questions:

- A. What do these passages say to do to be restored to the image of God?
  - 1. Receive Christ as Lord and continue to live in him (2:6).
- B. What do these passages say it means to live in Christ (or follow his way)?
  - 1. Continue growing in Christ by reading and listening to God's Word, praying, singing God's praises, and loving other people (2:7; 3:12–16).
  - 2. Thank God often, in all circumstances (2:7; 3:15–17).
  - 3. Set your mind on things of God, rather than dwelling on things that will pass away (3:1–3).
  - 4. Remember and believe that your life is in Christ and you will one day appear with Christ in glory (3:4).
  - 5. Put off your sin and put on the new self, "which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (3:5–10).

6. Put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and love (3:12–14).
7. Let Christ's peace rule your heart and be so filled with Christ's Word that it lives in you (3:15–16).
8. Do everything in the name, and for the glory, of Christ (3:17).
9. Obey your parents (3:20).
10. Work wholeheartedly at glorifying God by reflecting his image, knowing that God will reward you (3:23).

**III. Read Genesis 2:21–22 and discuss the following question:**

- A. How did Joe and Gus glorify God as men?
  1. As Adam gave of himself to bring life to Eve, Joe and Gus gave of themselves to bring life to Kylie.

**Pray**, thanking God for the beauty, power, and glory of his image. Ask him to deepen your faith as you read God's Word, thank him, set your mind on him, look forward to Christ's return, put off sin, put on the new self, obey, and work with whole hearts.

## Chapter 18: What a Mess!

Pray, asking God to help you live out of the hope Christ has secured for you.

**I. Read Genesis 1:28, Genesis 2:18–23, and Zephaniah 3:17. Discuss the following question:**

- A. How did Joe reflect God's image?
  - 1. As God discerned what Adam needed (Genesis 2:18) and met that need (Genesis 2:21–23), Joe discerned what Brandon and Cody needed and devised a plan to meet that need.
  - 2. Joe discerned what Molly and Kylie needed (Genesis 2:18) and planned serious measures to protect the girls.
- B. How did Joe reflect God's image as a man?
  - 1. Joe gave of himself to bring life to Molly (Genesis 2:21–22). He labored to clearly and lovingly communicate his delight in her beauty (Zephaniah 3:17).

**II. Read John 3:16 and discuss the following questions:**

- A. What did God give to save people?
  - 1. God gave his Son.
- B. How does this gift of God's Son bring life to people?
  - 1. Anyone who believes in God's Son will have eternal life.
- C. How did Matthew glorify God as a male?
  - 1. When Matthew offered to give the vase to Molly, he gave of himself to Molly.

**III. Read Genesis 1:28 and discuss the following question:**

- A. How did Joe reflect God's image?
  - 1. As God blessed people, Joe spoke a blessing over Molly, giving her hope that she could blossom.

**IV. Read these passages from Luke and discuss the ways God the Son entered the mess of our world that resulted from Adam's sin:**

- A. When he was born in a stable, God the Son entered into the mess of our world (2:7).
- B. When he was tempted by Satan, God the Son entered into the mess of

our world (4:13).

- C. When he experienced the murderous wrath of men, God the Son entered into the mess of our world (4:28–29; 11:53–54; 19:47; 20:19–20).
  - D. When he touched lepers, God the Son entered into the mess of our world (5:13).
  - E. When he was criticized, God the Son entered into the mess of our world (5:21; 6:2, 7, 11; 11:15; 15:2; 16:14).
  - F. When he had compassion on people, God the Son entered into the mess of our world (7:13; 19:41–42).
  - G. When he was dishonored, God the Son entered into the mess of our world (7:44–46; 8:53).
  - H. When he bore patiently with sinners, God the Son entered into the mess of our world (9:41, 46; 19:45; 22:24).
  - I. When he was treated unjustly by the governing authorities—mocked, insulted, flogged, and killed—God the Son entered into the mess of our world (Luke 18:32; 23:1–25, 35–39).
  - J. When he was betrayed by his loved ones, God the Son entered into the mess of our world (22:3–6, 47–61).
  - K. How did Joe reflect the image of Christ?
    - 1. Joe entered into the mess of Brandon and Cody’s and Molly and Kylie’s worlds.
- V. **Read Genesis 3:17–19, Luke 22:39–44 and Mark 15:16–20. Discuss the following question:**
- A. How did Jesus endure the thorns and sweat mentioned in Genesis 3?
    - 1. Knowing he would be under the wrath and curse of God, he prayed so intensely that his sweat became like great drops of blood (Luke 22:44). Jesus had a crown of thorns (Mark 15:17).
- VI. **Read Galatians 3:13–14 and 2 Corinthians 5:21. Discuss the following questions:**
- A. Because Christ never sinned, he was the only person who did not deserve the thorns and sweat that resulted from the curse. Why did Christ endure the curse?

1. Christ became a curse so those who believe in him could be blessed (Galatians 3:13–14). Jesus not only entered, but absorbed, the mess of our sin so we might become like him (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- B. Although Joe was not toiling against thorns and thistles that grow in the ground, his masculine work of tending and protecting people was full of sweat and toil. What are some of the difficulties Joe faced as he reflected the image of Christ?
1. He sweltered as he ran after Cody and Brandon. He made a mess of his good suit. Several times, he wasn't sure what to do next. His knees were burning while he squatted in the alley holding Molly and writing down the boys' names. He had trouble communicating with someone at Brandon's house. Kylie was angry with him and hit him during her tantrum.

**Pray**, thanking God that he loved us enough to enter into our mess so we could live in his joyful and beautiful home forever.

## Chapter 19: Born for the Roller Coaster

- I. **Pray, asking God to help you know and honor him as King.**
  - A. How did Joe glorify God as a man?
    1. He led his family by initiating prayer with his wife when they needed wisdom as they decided whether or not to help Matthew work on his surprise.
- II. **Read Psalms 18:1–2 and 47:2, 6–7. Discuss the following question:**
  - A. How did Joe, Stephen, and Ethan glorify God by reflecting his image?
    1. God rules his people so they can know him as King. Joe, Stephen, and Ethan designed a castle so Cody, Brandon, Molly, and Kylie could know about God as their King and fortress.
- III. **Read Zechariah 9:16–17 and discuss the following questions:**
  - A. How did Matthew glorify God by reflecting his image?
    1. As God beautifies his people, Matthew designed a dress to show Molly how beautiful she was.
    2. Matthew gave of himself (his time, talent, and money) to pour life into Molly.
- IV. **Read Romans 8:18–39 and discuss the following questions:**
  - A. How was Matthew suffering in this chapter?
    1. Matthew was finding it painful and frightening to live as a boy growing into a man.
  - B. Imagine taking the suffering of all of God’s people throughout all of history and cramming it into a huge box. According to Romans 8:18, that box of suffering would be tiny compared to what?
    1. The glory that will be revealed in God’s children.
  - C. For what great event is creation waiting?
    1. Creation is waiting for God’s children to be revealed in glory (Romans 8:18–21).
  - D. Will any of God’s children be uncomfortable with the new bodies God will give them?
    1. No, all God’s children will be gloriously free (8:21) in their redeemed bodies (8:23).

- E. What does Matthew have to do since he cannot see this hope now?
    - 1. Matthew has to wait patiently for what God has promised (8:24–25) knowing that God will use his suffering to make him like Christ (8:28–29) and believing that the God who is for him (8:31) will give him everything he needs (8:32).
  - F. What help does Matthew have while he waits?
    - 1. The Holy Spirit helps him in his weakness and prays for him (Romans 8:26–27). Christ, too, is interceding for him (Romans 8:34).
  - G. If you also have this help, how will that change the way you live?
- V. **Read Luke 15:7, Genesis 1:27–28 and Matthew 28:18–20. Discuss the following question:**
- A. What would God, his angels, and all God’s people in heaven be doing as Matthew reflected God’s image as a male by giving of himself to bring life to Molly?
    - 1. As there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, those in heaven would be celebrating Matthew’s steps of faith and courage as he embraces his calling to live as a male for the glory of God (Genesis 1:27–28) and get involved in something bigger than himself by working in partnership with God to see Molly, Kylie, Brandon and Cody become Christ’s disciples (Matthew 28:18–20).

**Pray**, thanking God that—through all the ups and downs of living as God’s boys, girls, men, and women in a world that is still under the curse—there is strong hope and help for God’s children. Thank God that everything that happens to his children works together to conform them to the image of Christ. Thank God that no hardship can separate God’s children from his mighty and merciful love.