



The Book of Matthew – Part 1 - June 13, 2021

Intro: Stefan Duerksen, Associate Pastor

A. The PLAN - NEW SERIES – MATTHEW – A Journey through the Book of Matthew

- The first of four gospels – gospel means, “GOOD NEWS” the Book of Matthew is the Good News written by Matthew. GOOD NEWS!! There is GOOD NEWS to be heard throughout the book!
- As we journey through we are going to use a **ROAD MAP** to help us engage with what we are studying...
 - **M-emorization**
 - **Matthew 5:2-12 & Matthew 28:18-20**
 - Of course you can pick your verse to memorize!
 - **A-pplication**
 - The Gospel means “Good News” we are called to proclaim GOOD NEWS – evangelize! This is a big part of what it means to love others! we share the GOOD NEWS with them.
 - Two ways: 1) share the Gospel (good news about Christ); 2) be a Witness
 - Sharing the GOOD NEWS is sharing the Gospel with someone!
 - Witnessing to someone is either sharing our personal testimony of Christ’s work within our lives or being a living testimony by demonstrating what Christ is like with our lives through good deeds and acts of kindness...
 - We will have weekly challenges to do this. Be living examples, look for opportunities to share what Jesus has and is doing in our lives and maybe some of you will even have the chance to SHARE the Gospel.
 - **P-rayer**
 - We need to be praying for our application steps, the people we reach out to, each other, the church and anything else the Lord lays on your heart.
- Along with this we are going to share the Passages we preach from week to week and those who want to read for themselves in their devotions are welcome to do so with the
 - **“Passage of the Week”**

B. History & Reliability of the Gospel of Matthew:

Questions being raised about the reliability of the Word and many CHRISTIANS have even resorted to making statements about the Bible such as this,

- **Quote from a popular author & professor of biblical studies at Eastern University in St. Davids, Pennsylvania, Peter Enns, regarding Scripture:** “Likewise, Enns is pushing back against another core historical tenet of the Christian faith: our belief about Scripture—what it is and what it does. The Bible isn’t doing what we think it’s doing, he argues. It doesn’t provide basically reliable historical accounts (instead, it’s often filled with myth and rewritten stories). It doesn’t provide consistent theological instruction (about, say, the character of God). And it doesn’t provide clear teaching about how to live (ethics, morality, Christian living). Although Christians have

generally always believed these things about Scripture, Enns contends that scholars now know they simply aren't true. And when Christians try to hold onto such beliefs, it only leads to fear, stress, anxiety, and infighting." <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/reviews/bible-tells/>

- **We are hearing more and more Christians in the West** that are proclaiming that the God of the OT was homicidal or cruel... and then they will urge us to just look at Jesus.
- The **Gospel of Matthew IS all about Jesus. But Jesus said some radical things!** He was not afraid to speak the truth and say things that often offended his listeners.
 - He said, "to be angry with someone was likened to murder", Matthew
 - To call someone, 'a fool' endangered you to hell,
 - To struggle with lust in the same as adultery,
 - It's better to gouge out your eye than continue to sin with it,
 - To sell everything you own and follow him,
 - He said, "unless you hate your mother and father you aren't worthy of him" Luke
 - Gave parables like the servant and talents where the servant who didn't do anything lost his salvation...
 - And said that many will say "Lord, Lord" and miss out on Heaven...
 - We are going to be addressing all of these and MORE as we go through the Book.

Four Important Keys for Understanding Scripture:

1. **The HOLY SPIRIT: 1 Corinthians 2:6-14 (ESV)**
2. **Coming to God on HIS TERMS.** The truth of the matter is we do not get to define WHO GOD IS. HE DOES. He is not created and to be molded into our image... rather, WE are created and HE molds US into HIS IMAGE.
3. **Humility:** Yes! The Bible is full of difficult Passages! But we must approach these with humility and the understanding that just because we don't understand something, doesn't make it wrong. God is God. He makes NO MISTAKES. Has NEVER sinned. EXISTS outside of time and space.
4. **Historical Context & Reliability of the text:** the context, audience, and the culture of the day... but always knowing the THIS BOOK – THE BIBLE – was inspired by the HOLY SPIRIT from start to finish and it is infallible.

Historical Reliability:

DATE WRITTEN: in 50-60AD.

"Scholars date the writing of Matthew's gospel to the late 50's or early 60's in the first century. This is due in part to a comment by the church father Irenaeus that "Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church"

MANUSCRIPTS FOUND: "To date we have over 5800 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, with an astounding 2.6 million pages of biblical text.¹ While some of these manuscripts are small and fragmentary, the *average* size of a New Testament manuscript is 450 pages.² Add to this the ancient manuscripts in Latin, Coptic, Syriac, Armenian, etc. which number in the tens of thousands,³ and you realize that there is an embarrassment of riches when it comes to New Testament manuscripts. No other ancient text can compare with the New Testament when it comes to the sheer volume of manuscripts, nor when we consider how close the earliest manuscripts are to the originals."

<https://biblearchaeologyreport.com/2019/02/15/the-earliest-new-testament-manuscripts/>

NON-CHRISTIAN RECORDS:

- **Evidence from Tacitus** - *Nero fastened the guilt ... on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of ... Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome....*

- **Evidence of Josephus** - *About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he ... wrought surprising feats.... He was the Christ. When Pilate ...condemned him to be crucified, those who had . . . come to love him did not give up their affection for him. On the third day he appeared ... restored to life.... And the tribe of Christians ... has ... not disappeared.*
- **Evidence from the Babylonian Talmud** - *On the eve of the Passover Yeshu was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald ... cried, "He is going forth to be stoned because he has practiced sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy."*
- **Evidence from Lucian** - *The Christians ... worship a man to this day – the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account.... [It] was impressed on them by their original lawgiver that they are all brothers, from the moment that they are converted, and deny the gods of Greece, and worship the crucified sage, and live after his laws*
- <https://www.bethinking.org/jesus/ancient-evidence-for-jesus-from-non-christian-sources>

C. History of Matthew & his Gospel account

Matthew wrote the first Gospel... it was written in Greek.

Matthew was considered one of the four Evangelists – Evangelist comes from the same Greek word for gospel (*euangelion*) and means, literally, “gospeling.” When we evangelize we are “gospeling” — we are spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Matthew was also known as Levi.

Matthew was a tax collector before Jesus called him... Matthew 9:9-12

By calling Matthew, Jesus was proclaiming that no one would be excluded from his movement—not even those society considered irredeemable.

D. Matthew 1 – the genealogy of Jesus

Matthew 1:1-17 (ESV)

Question regarding Mat 1:17 – weren’t there more than 14 generations between each of these groups of people? The answer. YES. There were!

- Because they didn’t have GOOGLE they had many different techniques for memorizing IMPORTANT FACTS. This is exactly what we see here, Matthew splits up the three important groups into 14’s. Then he highlights 14 names in each... and excludes some along the way...
- He highlights the names that are of MOST IMPORTANCE.
- **This again... demonstrates the GOOD NEWS that Matthew was so excited about!!!**
 - Look who IS included! In a culture where women were not seen as equal to men and genealogies were traced through men... and Matthew was already leaving some names out... yet he includes 5 women!!!
 - The inclusion of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba (wife of Uriah), and Mary is unusual, since descent was usually traced through men as the head of the family. Rahab and Ruth were Gentiles, and Tamar, Rahab and Bathsheba were women of questionable character. The lineage is comprised of men, women, adulterers, prostitutes, heroes and Gentiles – and **JESUS WOULD BE SAVIOR OF ALL!!!**

E. Practice: If he used them, why not me?

1. Take a moment and write down something of your character, abilities, personality, past, that you feel disqualifies you from ministry.
2. Take a moment (30 seconds) to meditate on the Good News that was given to people of disreputable character and actions... remembering that all Jesus requires is a, "Yes" from you and the willingness to step out in faith and obedience...
3. Ask Jesus, what he wants to say to you about your weaknesses and whether he can still use you...

Road M.A.P. Weekly Challenge:

M-emorize: Memorize Matthew 5:3. Read it, write it, pray it, say it.

A – pplication: 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 – ray for the Holy Spirit to empower you as you step out in faith, pray for the person you just encouraged.

If you need prayer, please email us Prayer@mysouthland.com

Hit a difficult time in life? Need some practical helps? Please email us Care@mysouthland.com