**The Gospel of Matthew**

**“The gospel was a message before it became a book.”**

**January 29, 2017 – Matthew 3-7**

As we read today remember the context: Matthew writes to a church that after the destruction of Jerusalem is looking for identity and trying to figure out what it means to be a Christian. Then consider how Matthew’s word might speak to you.

Why does Matthew quote scripture so often? Is he trying to prove that Jesus is the Messiah to unbelievers? “This is a mistaken notion for two reasons: (1) The Gospel of Matthew is not directed to outsiders in order to convert them, but to insiders to express, clarify and strengthen their faith. (2) As “proof” Matthew’s use of scripture is not convincing.” (He takes too many things out of context for this to be the case) [[1]](#footnote-1)

**Read about John the Baptist: Matthew 3:1-17**

Matthew Quotes Isaiah: **Isaiah 40:3**  3 A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

* How is Matthew different? What is the difference in message?

How is John dressed? Compare him to the famous Biblical character listed below.

**2 Kings 1:7-8**  7 He said to them, "What sort of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?" 8 They answered him, "A hairy man, with a leather belt around his waist." He said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

* Do you remember where Elijah was taken into heaven?

Discuss the two types of Baptism that John names.

What do you notice about Jesus’ baptism?

“it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness” – “Righteousness here means, as often elsewhere, doing the revealed will of God.” [[2]](#footnote-2)

**Temptation of Jesus: Matthew 4:1-11**

* “In Mark, the confrontation between Jesus and Satan is a test of strength, not a moral temptation, and no words are exchanged. Matthew… is a verbal battle between Jesus and Satan, in which the tempter tries to divert the obedient Son of God from his path.
* Matthew creates a literary bracket by crafting this dispute with Satan so that it corresponds to the disputes with the Jewish leaders at the end of Jesus’ ministry, thereby suggesting the underlying cosmic conflict that surfaces in the confrontation between Jesus and the Jewish leaders.” [[3]](#footnote-3)

**Preaching & Call of the Disciples: Matthew 4:12- 5:2**

* Jesus’ message to people is repent – (metaneo in Greek) The word does not picture sorrow or remorse, but a change in the direction of one’s life. “Get yourself a new orientation for the way you live, then act on it”
* “Follow me” - What might be the message to Matthew’s original audience regarding following Jesus?

**Beatitudes - Read Matthew 5:3-16**

Notice that the ‘Sermon on the Mount’ begins at 5:3 and ends at 7:27

What do you hear in the beatitudes (5:3-12)?

* The Beatitudes are written in unconditional performative language. The do not merely describe something that already is, but bring into being the reality they declare. The form is not “if you will x, then y” or “whoever x, then y,” but unconditionally declare that those who are x will be y. [[4]](#footnote-4)

For Matthew the poor represent not only those of literal poverty but also those with a lack of arrogance and sense of one’s own need – those dependent upon God.

**Analysis of 5:3-16 from ‘Enter the Bible.’**

* Blessing is a favorite word of Matthew, as a quick concordance search will reveal. It is thus significant both for the Sermon and for the whole of Matthew's Gospel that Jesus begins with this theme. Blessing has to do with how the Gospel understands the kingdom of heaven. Blessing is not first of all a program to fulfill, but a rehearsing of the promises of God that in the repetitive refrains are meant to be seen as touching and shaping all areas of life. God's blessing is as much a part of the essence of God's people as saltiness and illumination are part of the essence of what it means to be salt and light. "In the same way" (5:16), those who are blessed will show forth that blessing in good works that give glory to God.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Notice the language – Not, “you can become salt/light” but “YOU ARE…” – (the you is plural) – what does that mean for disciples then and now?

Skim through your Bible looking at the following passages: What do you notice about them?

**The Law – Matthew 5:17-48**

Matt 5:17 The Law & the ProphetsMatt 5:21 Concerning AngerMatt 5:27 Concerning AdulteryMatt 5:31 Concerning DivorceMatt 5:33 Concerning OathsMatt 5:38 Concerning RetaliationMatt 5:43 Love for Enemies

**Temple Service – Matthew 6:1-18**

Matt 6:1 Concerning AlmsgivingMatt 6:5 Concerning Prayer

-Lord’s PrayerMatt 6:16 Concerning Fasting

**More Instructions in Righteous Living –Matthew 6:19-7:12**

Matt 6:19 Concerning TreasuresMatt 6:22 The Sound EyeMatt 6:24 Serving Two MastersMatt 6:25 Do Not WorryMatt 7:1 Judging OthersMatt 7:6 Profaning the HolyMatt 7:7 Ask, Search, KnockMatt 7:12 The Golden Rule

What should we do with these instructions?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What message might Matthew/Jesus be trying to convey? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Warnings - Read Matthew 7:13-27**
Matthew 7:13 The Narrow GateMatthew 7:15 A Tree and Its FruitMatthew 7:21 Concerning Self-DeceptionMatthew 7:24 Hearers and Doers How does this sermon “affect” you? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - What was Jesus’ message to the crowd? **metaneo**

1. Eugene M. Boring, New Interpreters Bible Commentary. Pg. 153 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Eugene M. Boring, New Interpreters Bible Commentary. Pg. 160 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Eugene M. Boring, New Interpreters Bible Commentary. Pg. 162 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Eugene M. Boring, New Interpreters Bible Commentary. Pg. 177 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. James A. Boyce, www.enterthebible.org [↑](#footnote-ref-5)