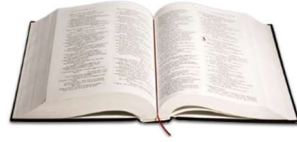


Foundation for Christian Education

Open Study Bible School



My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.
Hosea 4:6

Part-Time Course in Biblical Theology

The Gospel According to Matthew

“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”
2 Timothy 2:2

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Biblical Theology Course

Subject: The Gospel According to Matthew, Chapters 1-9

The Gospel According to Matthew Chapters 1-9

The Gospel According to Matthew, will be delivered in three sections:

- 1. Chapters 1-9**
- 2. Chapters 10-13**
- 3. Chapters 14-28**

Course Introduction: Aims:

1. To understand the structure and purpose of Matthew's Gospel.
2. To understand the important doctrinal and prophetic aspects of the Gospel.
3. To explain the Dispensational and Pre-Millennial viewpoint of this study.
4. To demonstrate how Matthew bridges between the Old and New Testaments.

Teaching Topics: Lessons:

1. Introduction
2. The Genealogy of Jesus — Matthew 1:1-17
3. The Supernatural Incarnation
4. The Ministry of Christ
5. The Calling of the Disciples
6. The Requirements of Holy Living
7. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah
8. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

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1. Introduction

The major focus is the question, “Why Christ did not bring in His Kingdom at His first coming?” The important doctrinal and prophetic themes are brought out in our study, from a Dispensational and Premillennial viewpoint.

Matthew is considered one of the most important books of the New Testament, bridging the Old and the New Testaments. Matthew deals primarily with the life of Jesus as fulfilling Testament prophecies relating to the coming King and explaining why the prophecies relating to the Messianic Kingdom on earth are delayed in fulfilment until Christ's second coming. Surely this Gospel is divinely intended to be the first Gospel. It is likely that the ‘sayings’ of Jesus were collected by Matthew in contemporary Hebrew (Aramaic) and possibly later translated into Greek. We should affirm that Matthew is the author and it is the inspired Word of God especially for Jewish people, and certainly written before AD 70. The Temple was still standing in Jerusalem. The Gospel was probably written during the period AD 45-55.

Matthew's purpose is to demonstrate that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament promise and prophecy. Jesus fulfilled all the requirements for being the promised King who is a descendent of David. Jesus' life and ministry give full credence to the fact that He is Israel's Messiah King. Matthew is thematic, not biographical, giving full portrayal of Christ's royal pedigree through His genealogical family tree and early recognition of His Person—the King of the Jews. There is much in this Gospel about the great Jewish themes of Law, Prophecy, Messiah, Kingdom and Israel. All point to the great truth that Jesus is the King of the promised Kingdom. The miracles of Jesus are credentials of His Messiahship, prophesied in the Old Testament, especially in Isaiah. Matthew introduces Jesus as the Messiah, King of Israel, fulfilling Old Testament prophecy.

As the Good News is unfolded by Matthew, he then gives the progressive account that Christ did not bring in His prophesied Kingdom at His first coming. Matthew documents growing rejection of Jesus, especially by leaders of the Jewish religion and His subsequent denunciation of their unbelief. Matthew also documents the gradual revelation by Jesus of Himself, especially matters relating to the postponement of the Kingdom—but not cancellation. Jesus gives clear indication, through the parables in Matthew 13, that this age will end in judgment, but also salvation for Israel in God's faithfulness. At the same time there will be judgment upon growing apostasy within what would be called Christendom or ‘Churchianity’. At that time, the true Church, to be known as the Body of Christ, will be completed, referred to as the ‘Pearl of Great Price’, Israel being called the ‘Hidden Treasure’ through the Church Age.

Eventually, in Matthew chapters 24 & 25, the Olivet Discourse in answer to Jesus' disciples three questions, Jesus describes the course of this Age between the two Advents of Christ, with special reference to the Great Tribulation, leading up to Christ's second Advent.

Matthew then gives the narrative of rejection leading to Golgotha, but also final Glory of the resurrection victory. He commissions His disciples to go into all the world, preaching the Gospel, teaching His Truth and baptizing believers in the Name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit. Jesus has been given all power in heaven and on the earth and His disciples are to go out in this encouragement. Christ would be with them in this work, to the end of the Church Age (the Dispensation of the Gospel), until He returns, first for the Church and then to become King of Israel and the entire world at His Second Advent, finally to deal with His




and Israel's enemies.

During this present Age, the Church was called into being (Matthew 16:18), and Christ will be with all His servants throughout this Age, to the completion of the Church and ultimately the ushering in of His postponed but promised Kingdom at His second coming.

Matthew explains why Christ suffered, died and rose again as a result of His rejection by the Jewish people, who had expected a conquering King to fulfil the Davidic Covenant, but had forgotten that Jesus the Messiah must first become the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, for the forgiveness of sins.

The early Church recognized Matthew's Gospel as the most important Gospel, fulfilling Old Testament Prophetic Promises with focus on Jesus, the Messiah King. Matthew also gives full content of the fundamentals of the Christian faith, producing a Church redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

The Structure of Matthew


Table 1: The Gospel of Matthew

This is Jesus the King of the Jews (27:37)		
Introduction	1:1 – 2:23	Genealogy of Jesus Christ
First Narrative	3:1 – 4:25	His early life and ministry
First Discourse	5:1 – 7:29	Sermon on the Mount
Second Narrative	8:1 – 9:38	Miracles of Healing and Forgiveness
Second Discourse	10:1-42	The Twelve and their Mission
Third Narrative	11:1 – 12:50	Rejection and Revelation
Third Discourse	13:1-52	
Fourth Narrative	13:53 – 17:27	Miracles and Responses
Fourth Discourse	18:1-35	
Fifth Narrative	19:1 – 23:39	Entry into Jerusalem and Controversy
Fifth Discourse	24:1 – 25:46	
Climax	26:1 – 27:66	Passion: Death and Resurrection
Conclusion	28:1-20	

Matthew, through alternation of narrative and discourse, recorded selected events from the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, in order to confirm to a Jewish audience that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and to explain the kingdom programme of God in the present age, in light of Israel’s rejection of her King.



2. The Royal Genealogy of Jesus — Matthew 1:1-17

Jesus Christ is portrayed as the true Son of David, Son of Abraham, Son of God, the true Messiah of Israel and Saviour of the world of both Jew and Gentile. Sufficient evidence is presented through genealogy, establishing legal claim of Jesus Christ to be justifiably recognized as King of Israel. His pedigree is recorded and the supernatural conception and Deity of Christ is announced through the Virgin Birth.

Matthew begins with Abraham and ends with Joseph as husband of Mary, but not the father of Jesus. When the Gospel says ‘of whom was born Jesus’, **‘whom’ is a feminine pronoun, referring to Mary.**

A 3-fold division within genealogy is explained in 1:17.

- (1) Generations from Abraham to David. Abraham was first in the line of promise - the Unconditional Abrahamic Covenant, and ends with David as king - the Unconditional Davidic Covenant.
- (2) Generations from David to Jeconiah.
- (3) Continuity of the line to Jesus.

Genealogy of Jesus with Reference to the Line of David through Jeconiah

The purpose of Joseph’s genealogy in Matthew is to show that if Jesus was really the son of Joseph, He could not be King. The purpose of the genealogy of Mary in Luke’s Gospel shows why Jesus could claim the throne of David.

Matthew	Luke
Joseph’s perspective	Mary’s perspective
Joseph in the central, active role	Mary in the central, active role
An angel appears to Joseph	An angel appears to Mary
See below for comments about Joseph	Jesus is a descendent of David through Mary

The requirement to sit on David’s throne was that of descent from David. After Solomon’s death, the kingdom was divided - Judah and Israel (Samaria). The requirement to sit upon the throne of Israel was one of prophetic sanction and Divine appointment. With the background of these two Old Testament requirements for Kingship and what is stated in Matthew and Luke, the question of Christ’s right to the throne of David and Israel can be resolved.

In Matthew the genealogy traces the line of Joseph, stepfather of Jesus, through Abraham to David and Solomon then on to Jeconiah (v11). Jeconiah is also called Jehoiachin and that inclusion of Jeconiah is significant in the light of Jeremiah 22:24-30, which concludes with, “...no descendent of Jeconiah will sit on the throne of David, or rule again in Judah. He shall be childless.” God cursed Jeconiah.

In Matthew, Joseph was a direct descendent of Jeconiah and thus Joseph could not inherit David’s throne. Matthew writes in such a way to prove conclusively that Joseph could not have any claim to David’s throne because of the curse on Jeconiah. Matthew then proceeds to



show that Jesus was not Joseph's son, for He was born of Mary, (see chapter 1:18-25 and verse 16).

In Jewish law a woman's line is traced through the husband. So how could we know whether the genealogy used is the husband or wife? In the Greek text of Luke, the definite article "the" precedes each name— this is not done in the English language, e.g.: "the" Matthew; "the" Luke, etc. In the Greek text of Luke every single name mentioned has the Greek definite article "the," with one exception and that is Joseph. What would that mean to someone reading it in original Greek? When the reader saw the definite article missing from Joseph's name, but present in all the others, it would then mean that this was not Joseph's genealogy, but rather it was Mary's genealogy. But, in keeping with Jewish law, it was the husband's name that was used. Two examples are Ezra 2:61 and Nehemiah 7:63. Luke 3:23 records also that Jesus was only the "supposed" son of Joseph, but not in the 'real' line including Joseph.

In Matthew we have recorded that Joseph is son of Jacob. How could he be called "son of Heli" in Luke? In Luke it is not recorded that 'Heli begat Joseph', so the natural explanation is that Joseph was the son-in-law of Heli, who was a descendent of David. In English it is translated that Joseph was the son of Heli. However, in the Greek "son" is not there. It is incorrectly supplied by the translators, no doubt, it was hoped, to make more sense. Yet, Joseph was called son of Heli, though only a son-in-law, in accordance with normal Jewish practice. See 1 Samuel 24:16 where David is called 'son' by Saul. We may safely conclude therefore that Joseph was the 'son of Heli' because he was espoused to Mary, Heli's daughter.

The Jerusalem Talmud, Chagigah 2:4 refers to Miriam (Jewish name for Mary) as the daughter of Heli. In long-standing Jewish tradition, Mary (Miriam) was recognized as the daughter of Heli. The absence of Mary's name is quite in keeping with Jewish practice on genealogies and it was not unusual for a son-in-law to be listed in his wife's (Mary/Miriam) genealogy.

In Luke's genealogy, Jesus is traced back through Nathan as the son of David. Thus Mary was a descendent of the house of David apart from Solomon, of whom Jeconiah descended. Jesus was Mary's son, so He was of the Davidic royal line, totally apart from the curse of Jeconiah.

One Old Testament requirement for Kingship was having correct Davidic line apart from Jeconiah. Jesus fulfilled this first requirement. However, Jesus was not the only member of the line of David, apart from Jeconiah. There were others too. Here the second requirement to Kingship comes into focus, that of Divine appointment of any existing members of the house of David. Only one received that appointment and that was Jesus:

"The angel said to her, fear not Mary: for you have found favour with God. And behold, you shall conceive in your womb and bring forth a son, and shall call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give to Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever', and of His Kingdom there shall be no end."
Luke 1:30-33

So how could Jesus claim the throne of David? Firstly, He was a member of the royal line of David and descendent of David, apart from Jeconiah. He came through Nathan, not Solomon and subsequently not Jeconiah. Secondly He alone received divine appointment to the throne



of David.

The above material about Christ's right to the throne of David, plus the research into the genealogies of Joseph and Mary have been taken from Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum's book entitled "Messianic Christology," published by Ariel Ministries, 1998, Appendix 4, 'Christ's Right to David's Throne,' pages 135 - 139.

Henry Einspruch's translation of Matthew's Gospel, (The Lewis and Harriet Lederer Foundation, 1939), is helpful in his comment at the foot of page 2, about the genealogy recorded in Matthew. He says,

"Matthew's genealogy of Jesus is a summary of Jewish history. Its threefold division into 3 x 14 family male members was evidently suggested by the name David, which in Hebrew has the numerical value of fourteen, d=4; v=6; d=4. This is in keeping with the rabbinic method of mnemonics, or aid to the memory."

Supernatural Conception — Matthew 1:18 -1:25

Joseph was legally betrothed to Mary described as 'husband' in v16. Mary's pregnancy was the result of the Holy Spirit's creativity. This fact was revealed to Joseph. Mary's Son shall be called Jesus. Matthew quotes Isaiah 7:14 to support the doctrine of the Virgin Birth: "The Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall His Name Immanuel."

Worship of The Magi — Matthew 2:1-12

These men were students of Astrology, or better terminology would be Astronomy. They searched the heavens for significant movements of stars. They would therefore be better called Astronomers. They came to Jesus considerably later on after his birth. They inquired where the King of the Jews would be born. There was widespread expectation of a coming great ruler, even as far away as Babylon where the Magi came from.

The wise men, or Magi (Greek: Magioi, from a Persian word for those experts in the stars—astronomers), saw an unusual star in the east, signifying to them that the King had come. This news troubled Herod. He did not want a rival ruler or Jewish uprising as a result. Herod was informed correctly of Micah 5:2, "but you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall He come forth to Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." NB. This Messiah would be an individual, not the Jewish nation.

This Messiah would be a ruling King. The wise men were guided by the star—to their amazement—to Bethlehem. The star had come from the east to guide them, even to the house in Bethlehem—a supernatural phenomenon. Note that Jesus was now found in a house, not a cave where He had been born. The wise men worshipped Jesus and gave significant gifts as important types, prophetically. Frankincense was presented to Jesus representing His fragrance of life and intercession (prayer and priesthood). Myrrh was presented to Jesus representing His suffering, sacrifice and death. Gold was presented to Jesus representing His true eternal deity.



In verses 12 to 15, God spoke to the Magi and to Joseph through an angel in warnings. Herod had planned to murder Jesus. Herod was dead within three years from that wicked plan. The Magi returned to their own country by different directions, not informing Herod of the whereabouts of King Jesus. Joseph took Mary and Jesus into Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. Joseph then returned to Israel, fulfilling Hosea 11:1, recorded in Matthew 2:15,

“...that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, ‘Out of Egypt I called My Son.’”

Massacre of the Children in Bethlehem — Matthew 2:15-18

This terrible crime in Bethlehem, planned by Herod the Great, was intended to make sure that King Jesus did not live to grow up to become the prophesied King of the Jews — no doubt influenced by Satan. In fact, this terrible crime fulfilled a prophecy in Jeremiah 31:15-16,

15 Thus says the Lord:
“A voice was heard in Ramah,
Lamentation and bitter weeping,
Rachel weeping for her children,
Refusing to be comforted for her children,
Because they are no more.”

16 Thus says the Lord:
“Refrain your voice from weeping,
And your eyes from tears;
For your work shall be rewarded, says the Lord,
And they shall come back from the land of the enemy.”

Verse 17 continues,

17 “There is hope in your future, says the Lord, that your children shall come back to their own border.”

It is interesting to note that Rachel was buried in Bethlehem and many women still wept at her tomb at the time of Jesus.

Return To Nazareth – Matthew 2:19-23

Joseph took Mary and Jesus to Nazareth (Hebrew: נָצֶרֶת – Netzeret) after the death of Herod fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 11:1,

“There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.”

Christ was declared to be a Rod or Branch. (Hebrew: נֶצֶר Netzer = Branch), from the stem of Jesse, which would be David.



Isaiah 11:2 confirms that

“The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.”

The source of His authority and power would be the sevenfold ministry of the Holy Spirit upon Him, namely, rest, wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and the fear of the LORD, His Father in heaven.

These incidents were highlighted by Matthew to give significant support to the conclusive evidence that Jesus is the Messiah, Son of David, King of the Jews, Son of God.

End of Lecture 1 Matthew Chapters 1-9

Lecture 2

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
- 3. The Ministry of Christ**
5. The Calling of the Disciples
4. The Requirements of Holy Living
5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah
6. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

The Ministry of John the Baptist – Matthew 3:1-12

There had been 400 years of silence of the Prophetic voice. There was no word from God. John's office and dress was similar to that of Elijah. John was the 'herald' to Jesus. John's preaching was, "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." This announcement fulfilled Isaiah 40:3-5,

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
“Prepare the way of the Lord;
Make straight in the desert
A highway for our God.
4 Every valley shall be exalted
And every mountain and hill brought low;
The crooked places shall be made straight
And the rough places smooth;
5 The glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
And all flesh shall see it together;
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

John's message sternly rebuked the hypocrisy of religion of his day, particularly that of the



Pharisees and Sadducees.

The Kingdom of Heaven phrase is not found in the Old Testament. The nearest would be found in Daniel 4:37 where Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges the King of Heaven. Daniel predicted the climax of world history as God gave him the revelation, with the prophetic revelation of the coming of the Son of Man, who would be given an everlasting Kingdom (Daniel 2:44).

Matthew alone uses the phrase 'Kingdom of Heaven' and rarely uses the phrase 'Kingdom of God.' Some commentators propose a distinction between the two phrases. They say that the Kingdom of Heaven includes all who profess to be subjects of the King, but some of these are 'apostate pretenders' only. The Kingdom of God is more specific and includes only true believers. Except they are 'born again' they cannot see the Kingdom of God (John 3:3, 5). Matthew 13 includes the genuine and the false depicted in the parables, e.g.: Wheat and Tares; Good and Bad Fish, the Mustard Tree containing the birds of the air which snatched away the seed in the Parable of the Sower. The word for 'bird' in both parables is the same Greek word, thus the interpretation can only be that they are Satan's agents in both parables, which snatch away or damage the proclaimed Word of God. It must be noted that all those accepted into the Kingdom of God will be in the Kingdom of Heaven during this age or dispensation.

Eschatologically and Dispensationally, a 3-fold distinction must be observed in the use of the phrase 'Kingdom of Heaven':

- 1) In John the Baptist's ministry the 'Kingdom of Heaven' is at hand, or near, meaning that it is manifested in the person of the King, now present on earth. In and through Jesus Christ, the Kingdom was being presented to Israel and would obviously affect the world.
- (2) In Matthew 13 the Kingdom is presented in its present mystery form, revealing that the rule of God over the earth is in the hearts of believers only, during this present age when the King is absent.

These are called mystery parables because they were not revealed in the Old Testament doctrine of the Kingdom.

- (3) The climactic form of the Kingdom will be realized when Christ returns to set up His Kingdom of Heaven upon the earth, in fulfilment of Daniel's prophecies and many other Old Testament Scripture passages, which picture the glorious Age and reign of the Son of David over the entire earth in Righteousness and Peace. This will be the thousand year reign of peace—the Millennial Reign of Christ hinted and depicted throughout Scripture from Genesis to Revelation.

Only the Premillennial interpretation of the concept of the Kingdom allows a literal [straightforward] interpretation of Old and New Testament prophecies relating to the future Kingdom.

[Note: the Kingdom of God will eventually exist in the Eternal State, once all of God's enemies are destroyed at the final judgement before the Great White Throne. There will no longer be both good and bad mixed together in the



Eternal State.]

John's ministry instituted a spiritual crisis in Israel. Would Israel accept or reject their King? John's ministry called the nation to repentance, and many people came out to hear John. His ministry was unique and dramatic after 400 years of silence from God. No Prophetic voice had been heard for four centuries.

John's baptism is not Christian baptism. It is not in response to the Holy Spirit's work. It is not a testimony of outward witness of being a member of the Body of Christ, the true Church. John's baptism is a religious ritual, signifying confession of sin and commitment to a holiness under Jewish religious life and the dispensation of Law—genuine Judaism, though distorted by Israel's religious leaders, who opposed John and later Jesus.

John called for a genuine repentance towards God. John challenged the idea that salvation was due to being descendants of Abraham. John declared that God could raise up children from 'stones' (Matthew 3:9). The Hebrew for 'children' is 'banim'; the Hebrew for 'stones' is 'abanim'.

These words are similar in sound, and when used together form a striking assonance. God can raise up 'banim' from 'abanim', a supernatural act to make children out of dead substance, but this is what God does in the supernatural act of new birth for the believer—life from the dead. Today, God does this in the Gentile nations, and will also do this eventually in the nation of Israel, notwithstanding that some individual Jews have already committed themselves to Christ, and more are following daily.

Romans 11:15-16 says,

15 For if their [Israel] being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? 16 For if the firstfruit is holy [set apart, different], the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches [Jewish people of Israel].

It will indeed be 'life from the dead', 'banim' from 'abanim'—life from dead stones.

John also declared that the axe is in God's hand to cut down every fruitless tree, i.e.: God judges dead religion and lifeless ritual.

The climax of John's dramatic ministry was the fact that he was only the forerunner or herald to the expected great Prophet (Deuteronomy 18:18-19) whose shoes John was not worthy to untie—the work of the lowest slave.

The Great Prophet is the Messiah one is the coming King who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with the fire of judgment on the nation of Israel, threshing wheat from the chaff, the judging of the genuine from the rubbish, which is fit only for burning.

Therefore there are four baptisms:

- (1) John's baptism for repentance.
- (2) The baptism of witness administered by Christ.
- (3) The baptism of the Holy Spirit



(4) The baptism of Fire.

The first prepared people to follow Christ and become true believers. These were later baptized as a testimony (witness) to their salvation.

In the second, believers became members of the Body of Christ, the true Church, through baptism administered by Christ through the Apostles (for example, Acts 19:1-5). [Christ never administered baptism personally, but always through His Apostles and Disciples.]

The baptism of the Holy Spirit did not occur until the Day of Pentecost recorded in Acts 2. See 1 Corinthians 12:13,

“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”

The fourth baptism (fire) seems to refer to the judgment which will take place at the second coming of Christ, for only then will the Lord deal with the Tares and destroy the chaff through this symbol of burning.

These four baptisms signify entrance into two new situations:

- (1) Separation to God for the righteous; or
- (2) Separation from God for the unrighteous.

The threshing floor is an apt figure to illustrate this truth of separation. The true will eventually be separated from the false.

The Baptism of Jesus – Matthew 3:13-17

Matthew alone records John’s protest when Jesus asks John to baptize Him. John agrees when Jesus says it will fulfil all righteousness, i.e.: part of the plan of salvation (3:15). It is worthy of note that the Trinity were present on this occasion—the voice of the Father and the presence of the Spirit at the baptism of the Son. Jesus’ baptism set Him apart for the role of Prophet, Priest and King and anticipated His death for the sin of Mankind.

The voice from Heaven (v. 17) alludes to Psalm 2:7, the coronation formula for the Messianic King of Israel, and to Isaiah 42:1, the ordination formula for Isaiah’s Servant of the Lord.

The passages combined indicate that Jesus’ mission as the Messiah King would be realized in terms of the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 52:13-53:12). Jesus did not become the Son of God at His Baptism, since He was that from the beginning (John 1:1-18; Col 1:13-20; Heb 1:1-3).

The divine voice only ratified and publicly proclaimed an already existing sonship, which informed both His message and His task, because His Kingdom is one of teaching, healing, humility and sacrifice (Matt 8:17; 12:18-21; 20:28).

Sonship is the basis for the Father’s choice of Jesus to fulfil the role of Messiah. Jesus’ eternal sonship prefigures His earthly role as Messiah in the Trinity.



More that filial consciousness is involved in Jesus' sonship. A supernatural and exclusive relationship exists between Father and Son, co-equal and co-eternal, and of the same essence.

Even the demons recognize this relationship at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry (Mark 1:23-26; Luke 4:33-35).

But there is more to it than that.

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. 14 John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 15 But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; 17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."
Matthew 3:13-17

There are two points to note. The first is that the "heavens were opened." All three synoptic gospels have this English expression. In Matthew and Luke the verb used is: ἑνεόχθησαν (Matthew 3:17), and ἀνεόχθηται (Luke 3:21); both are from the root ἀνοίγω, anoigo, meaning to open, or to open up.

Mark, however, uses the verb schizomenous, from the root σχίζω, schizo, meaning to split, or divide (Mark 1:10). This is the same verb used in the Septuagint Greek translation of Exodus 14:21 when Moses divided the waters, so that Israel could pass safely through the waters of chaos to the other side and God's protection.

The Baptism of Jesus is being portrayed as another Exodus event, where the deliverance from Egypt was portrayed as a deliverance from hostile gods. In Exodus 15:11 Moses asked a rhetorical question, "Who is like YHWH among the Gods?" the answer is obvious, no-one. The exodus event was a release from exile.

The baptism of Jesus is a new exodus event. The Kingdom of God has returned and this time it will not fail because it is being led by the visible YHWH, now incarnate as Jesus of Nazareth. This is event more startling and reinforced when we read Jude 5:

Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

Jude 5

The first point to note is that Jude has **Jesus** leading the Israelites out of Egypt. The reference is to the visible Angel of the Lord, who was YHWH in human form, who brought Israel out of Egypt into the Promised Land (Judges 2:1-2; cf.: Exodus 23:20-23).

The second point to note is that all three synoptic gospels have God's voice from heaven pronouncing, "You are My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." We tend to think of this as a sentimental declaration of love (actually the word used is agape). It is far more than that. When God refers to Jesus as "beloved" He is declaring the kingship of Jesus, and His legitimate status as heir to David's throne.



The key term is “beloved.” Scholars have noted that it was used of Solomon, the original heir to David’s throne. It is difficult to see that in the English translation, since the Hebrew is usually translated as a proper name: Jedidiah.

Solomon is referred to as “Jedidiah” in 2 Samuel 12:24-25:

24 Then David comforted his wife, Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her, and she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. And the Lord loved him 25 and sent a message by Nathan the prophet. So he called his name Jedidiah, because of the Lord. 2 Sam 12:24-25

Jedidiah means “Beloved of the LORD.” This is the name or term that the LORD wanted assigned to Solomon. The name in Hebrew is: *yedidyahu* and is related to *dawid/dawiyd*, the proper name “David,” which also means “beloved.”

Used of Solomon, the title marked him as the legitimate heir to the Davidic Covenantal throne. The same message is here telegraphed with respect to Jesus. God’s own voice announces that, ***This is the king, the legitimate heir to David’s throne.***

This is a challenge that would have been well understood by those present at the time, both earthly and heavenly, and goes in part to explain why they had such hostility towards Jesus as soon as He emerged from the waters of Baptism, to begin His ministry, which starts by the Spirit leading Him into the wilderness.

End of Lecture 2 of Matthew Chapters 1-9

Lecture 3

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
3. **The Ministry of Christ**
5. The Calling of the Disciples
4. The Requirements of Holy Living
5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah
6. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

The Temptation of Jesus – Matthew 4: 1-11

First, we need to explore the significance of the term “wilderness.” The supernatural context and dimensions of Jesus actions and statements frequently go unnoticed. We have just noted that the Baptism of Jesus was presented as a new Exodus event. As Moses led Israel through the watery chaos and the unholy ground of other Gods, so Jesus, “the prophet like Moses”



(Acts 3:22; 7:37) first came through the waters (His Baptism) and wilderness testing, ahead of His own ministry.

This mission was not only about the single land and people of Israel, whom YHWH had created after consigning the existing nations to the dominion of lesser gods at Babel. The coming of Jesus (the incarnate YHWH) is the beginning of reclaiming those nations as well. But the gods of darkness were not going to surrender without a fight—and the battle began so quickly that Jesus barely had time to dry off.

All the gospel writers tell us that the next thing that happened to Jesus was his journey into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil and the direction of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 4:1; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1). We need to think about why the Holy Spirit chose the wilderness. The term obviously refers to a literal place, most likely the Wilderness of Judea (Matthew 3:1), but it is also a metaphor for unholy ground.

Conceptually, the wilderness was where Israelites believed “desert demons,” including Azazel, the chief of the demons, actually lived (Leviticus 16:8, 10, 26, ESV).¹ The Jewish Day of Atonement called for driving the goat “for Azazel” into the desert outside Jerusalem. The wilderness was a place associated with the demonic, so it’s no surprise that this is where Jesus meets the devil.

But why would the Holy Spirit compel Jesus to go into the wilderness to confront the devil? The answer is bound up with the presentation of Jesus’ baptism as a new exodus event and the revival of God’s kingdom on earth. In the Old Testament, Israel, the Son of God (Exodus 4:23), passed through the sea (Exodus 14-15) and then were led out into the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land to re-establish YHWH’s kingdom.

But Israel’s faith and loyalty to YHWH faltered (Judges 2:11-15). They were eventually seduced by the hostile divine powers “demons” whose domain was the wilderness (Deuteronomy 32:15-20). Jesus the messianic Son of God and royal representative of the nation of Israel, would succeed where the nation failed.

Jesus is compelled by the Spirit to experience this period of testing. The main test in all three aspects of Satan’s temptation is to persuade Jesus to act independently of His Father - doing His own will. He came to do His Father’s will. The subtle test was to establish salvation by other ways, **other than by the way of the cross**, which was the only way and appointed by the Father.

The first test was the challenge to Jesus to turn stones into bread. He could eat instead of continue fasting, being especially hungry at the end of a long fast; also He could become a social benefactor by providing food for many in difficult times, and gain a great following this way, **avoiding the cross**. This was the easy way out. Jesus resisted this by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3,

“...man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.”

¹ Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, Pieter W. van der Horst, eds., *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, 2nd ed. (Leiden; Boston; Cologne; Cambridge, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), art. B. Janowski, *Azazel*, p. 128.



The second test was to persuade Jesus to test God the Father to preserve His life if He jumped from the high pinnacle of the Temple. This miraculous preservation would prove his deity, and by this miraculous sign and work, Jesus could gain many followers by a sensational act. Here is the temptation to display ‘signs and wonders’ in order to gain recognition and great numbers of followers, **again avoiding the cross**.

Satan only quoted part of Psalm 91:11-12, deliberately omitting *to keep you in all your ways*, in verse 11:

11 “For He shall give His angels charge over you,
To keep you in all your ways.
12 In their hands they shall bear you up,
Lest you dash your foot against a stone.” (My emphasis)

This was a deceitful misapplication of Scripture by omission, Again, Jesus used Scripture to reply to Satan. He used Deuteronomy 6:16,

“You shall not tempt the Lord your God...”

It is forbidden to test God.

The third test was to offer Jesus kingship over the world of nations, if He would worship Satan. Here was the temptation to establish the Kingdom and rule over the nations **avoiding the cross again**. Satan is permitted to be the god of this world, but Satan had no right to bargain with Jesus or offer Him the kingdoms of this world as if Satan was the rightful owner.

Satan was the usurper since the temptation of the first Adam. Satan could not win over the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven (1 Corinthians 15:47). Jesus replied to Satan quoting from Deuteronomy 6:13,

“You shall fear the Lord your God and serve Him only...”

Jesus commanded Satan to depart from Him. Jesus was the victor over Satan and not his slave. Satan had failed here.

The victory was through the use of the written Word of God as a sword and effective weapon against the enemy. Satan had failed here in every avenue of testing Jesus - through the lust of the flesh - food at the end of a long time of fasting; the lust of the eyes and the pride of life to gain power and establish the Messianic Kingdom by wrong means.

In Genesis 3:5, Satan told Adam and Eve a lie,

“For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.”

God’s original plan was for Adam and Eve to rule the world without sin, according to God’s will. Satan usurped their allegiance and so became the Lord of this World.



1 John 2:15-16 says,

15 “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world.”

In conclusion, Jesus was God in the flesh. Satan tested Jesus, attempting to make Jesus demonstrate His deity independently from His Father, to gain power over men and so establish His Kingdom and **avoid the cross**. But the Father had designated the cross to obtain redemption for us all by the shedding of His own blood to establish the New Covenant and the way back to God.

Jesus could be tested, but could not be caused to sin as the God-Man and Second Adam, the Lord from Heaven. Satan would return again to test Jesus, but there could only be one victor—Jesus the Christ.

4. Jesus begins His Galilean Ministry—Matthew 4:12-22.

Verses 12-17 – The Great Light

“And leaving Nazareth,
He came and dwelt in Capernaum”

John the Baptist had been arrested by Herod the Great, so Jesus moved north and stayed at Capernaum, fulfilling Isaiah 9:1-2,

1 Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed,
As when at first He lightly esteemed
The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
And afterward more heavily oppressed her,
By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan,
In Galilee of the Gentiles.
2 The people who walked in darkness
Have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them a light has shined.

Jesus took up the preaching of John, ‘Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand’ (v. 17)

This whole passage of 4:12-23 introduces the beginning of Jesus public ministry in Galilee, in fulfilment of Isaiah 9:1-2. It is a ministry characterized by preaching, teaching and healing.

Verses 18-21 – Calling the First Four Disciple

Then He said to them, “Follow Me,
and I will make you fishers of men.”

Jesus called Simon Peter and Andrew, then James and John. These fishermen were to become fishers of men (v. 19). Whereas all four are recorded as leaving behind their livelihoods, James and John are recorded as leaving their father.

The Early Preaching Ministry of Jesus – Matthew 4:23-25.



Verses 23-25 – Preaching, Teaching and Healing

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people

Jesus preached the Gospel of the Kingdom - the King of Israel is in their midst. He healed all who were brought before Him. As His reputation spread, great multitudes followed Him.

Jesus preached the Gospel of the Kingdom – the King of Israel was present if they would acknowledge it. The Gospel of the Kingdom is different from the Gospel of Grace. The latter relates to the Church Age and brings salvation for the world of humanity.

The Gospel of the Kingdom relates mainly to the nation of Israel, but, in the Great Tribulation, the Gospel of the Kingdom will once again be preached by the 144,000 Jewish people saved in the Great Tribulation. They will be travelling through Israel and then worldwide, similarly to John the Baptist who preceded the first coming of Christ, they are the herald of the second coming.

Jesus healed many as credentials of His Messiahship, fulfilling Isaiah 35:5-6,

5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.
6 Then the lame shall leap like a deer,
And the tongue of the dumb sing.
For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness,
And streams in the desert.

The fulfilling of this text proved who Jesus was. On a much larger scale, Jesus will exercise this same power and authority in the future Kingdom which He will establish when He comes again.

This summary (vv. 23-25) is the proclamation of the new era by both the words and the deeds of Jesus. The ministry is life-giving (vv. 13-16), preparatory (v. 17), personal (vv. 18-22), instructive (v. 23), and successful (vv. 24-25).

End of Lecture 3 Matthew Chapters 1-9

Lecture 4

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
3. The Ministry of Christ
5. The Calling of the Disciples
4. **The Requirements of Holy Living**



5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah
6. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

The Moral Principles of the Kingdom – Matthew 5-7

Matthew presents Jesus as King and here is the message for life in His Kingdom—the Sermon on the Mount. He spoke initially to His disciples, but others joined, perhaps with mixed motives, even curiosity. Matthew places this early in his Gospel to establish the main principles of life expected in the Kingdom, e.g.: the Beatitudes reflect the ‘attitude-to-be’ in Kingdom life.

Rejection of these principles grows in the next few chapters leading up to the climax of rejection in chapter 12, leading to major teaching in chapter 13 as a result of Jesus’ rejection by Israel's religious leaders.

Matthew’s third major discourse of teaching is in chapters 24 and 25, dealing with the End Times of world history in the hands of Gentile powers, leading up to the return of the King.

Matthew is comprehensive in presenting three major discourses of teaching relating to Kingdom truth and life. The fourth major teaching is in John’s Gospel chapters 13-17, which relates to the spiritual character of this present age and life of the Church, the Body of Christ. Matthew’s concern is the Kingdom presented to Israel, in order to enlighten the Jewish people to the Messiahship of Jesus and His right to Kingly rule, thereby providing salvation for Jewish people—by way of the cross before the wearing of His crown.

The Sermon on the Mount relates to the expectancy of the character of those who belong to Christ, the true but rejected King. It certainly instructs a Christian how to live, because he is a subject of the King and a member of the Kingdom, so it has its relevance now in the present Church Age.

The sermon does not present justification by faith, or point a sinner to the Saviour.

But it certainly outlines life as it will be in the Kingdom to come on earth - the future Millennial Kingdom when Christ becomes King of the Jews and has the whole earth subject to His rule. In all the Gospels Jesus offers Himself as the prophesied King; and the Kingdom He offered was the prophesied Kingdom predicted in the Old Testament.

Jesus clearly presented Himself to the Jews as the prophesied King, the Son of David, having the designated right to reign and to rule on this earth when he returns. The Kingdom is planned to be a reign of righteousness as well as a reign of peace. The Kingdom life made demands upon the subjects of the King. The Jewish people had neglected the spiritual and moral principles.

They only thought of the political implications, such as deliverance from any ruling enemy over them, e.g.: the Romans. There will eventually be political deliverance for Israel, through the Person, power and presence of the King, having given His subjects regeneration spiritually. The sermon does have its eschatological implications and context within chapters 5-7.



However, Jesus expected immediate response for life now but also spoke truths concerning His coming Kingdom. Here is a 15-point overview:

1. **The Beatitudes: Moral Principles of the Kingdom** – Matthew 5:2-12
2. **Influence of True Disciples** – Matthew 5:13-16
3. **Laws and Principles of the Kingdom** – Matthew 5:17-48
4. **The Life of Faith in the Kingdom; giving alms; charitable deeds** – Matthew 6:1-4
5. **Instructions concerning Prayer** – Matthew 6:5-15
6. **Fasting to be Seen Only by God** – Matthew 6:16-18
7. **True Treasure** – Matthew 6:19-24
8. **Cure for Anxiety** – Matthew 6:25-34
9. **Doing the Will of the Father; not judging others** – Matthew 7:1-6
10. **Encouragement to Pray** – Matthew 7:7-11
11. **The Golden Rule** – Matthew 7:12
12. **The Two Ways of Choice; the True and the False** – Matthew 7:13-14
13. **True and False Teachers; Both Known by Their Fruits** – Matthew 7:15-20
14. **True and False Professions** – Matthew 7:21-23
15. **True and False Foundations** – Matthew 7:24-29

Brief Commentary on the Beatitudes

1. *The Beatitudes: Moral Principles of the Kingdom* – Matthew 5:2-12

The Constitution of the Kingdom: The Beatitudes describe eight principles of the Kingdom in character and life. The disciples were not only subjects of the Kingdom but also secondary foundations of the Church, so their reward would be in heaven (vv. 3, 10). As we are disciples so also is our reward.

Verse 3 – First Principle

“Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

The poor in spirit are those who acknowledge their own helplessness and rely only on God.



They sense their spiritual lack and find it supplied by the Lord Jesus. In their humility they inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Verse 4 – Second Principle

“Blessed *are* those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.”

Mourning here refers to the sorrow which is experienced in fellowship with the Lord Jesus, who was and is rejected by Israel and by most Gentiles. It is an active sharing of the sorrowful sense of the world’s sin and its evil with the Lord Jesus.

Verse 5 – Third Principle

“Blessed *are* the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth.”

Meekness is strength under control. It is not weakness. The meek person is gentle and mild in manner but strong in intent. Now, they inherit abuse and persecution, but will one day inherit the earth on Christ’s return.

Verse 6 – Fourth Principle

“Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.”

Such people are promised satisfaction. They long to see integrity and practical holiness in the church, and justice in society. Their hunger will be filled in Christ’s kingdom.

Verse 7 – Fifth Principle

“Blessed *are* the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.”

In one sense it means to forego punishment from those who deserve it. In a wider sense it means helping others in need who cannot help themselves. We imitate God when we have mercy with compassion and so will obtain mercy from God.

Verse 8 – Sixth Principle

“Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.”

A pure-hearted person is someone whose motives are clear and unmixed, with a clear conscience, and whose thoughts are holy. The pure-hearted can sense God now through the Word and Spirit. They will actually see God when Jesus returns, and in eternity.

Verse 9 – Seventh Principle

“Blessed *are* the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.”

The Lord is referring to those who actually intervene to make peace. By making peace, believers manifest their true nature as sons of God. God will one day acknowledge them as part of His family, who bear the family likeness.



Verse 10 – Eighth Principle

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

These are people who are persecuted, not for their own wrongs, but for righteousness' sake. The kingdom of heaven is promised to those believers who suffer for doing right. Their integrity condemns the ungodly world and attracts its hostility.

Verses 11-12 – Eighth Principle Restated

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you,
and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.
Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven,
for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

There is a difference to verse 10, in that the persecution is not for righteousness' sake, but for Christ's sake. The disciples of Christ have been persecuted throughout history. To suffer for Christ's sake is a privilege that should cause great joy, because there is a great reward in heaven for those who choose to become like the prophets of old, who stood true in the face of death.

The Beatitudes paint a portrait of the ideal citizen of the kingdom of Christ. Notice the emphasis on righteousness (v.6), and joy (v.12). Paul may have had this passage in mind when he wrote:

“For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”
Romans 14:17

Brief Commentary on the Influence of True Disciples

2. *Influence of True Disciples* – Matthew 5:13-16

Verse 13 – Salt of the Earth

“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavour, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.”

Jesus likened His disciples to salt. They were to be to the world what salt is to food. Salt seasons food, and hinders the spread of corruption. It creates thirst and brings out the flavour.

So His disciples are to add restraint to society, serve as a preservative, and make others thirst for the righteousness previously described. If the salt loses its flavour, how can it be restored? It is impossible.

Once salt [the disciples] has [have] lost its flavour [their effectiveness] there is no way to restore its [their] true function. It is [They are] good for nothing.

The disciple has one great function, to be the salt of the earth by living out the terms of discipleship described in the Beatitudes, and all through the rest of the Sermon on the Mount. If a disciple fails to demonstrate this spiritual reality, the world will have only contempt for such an undedicated believer, and trample his testimony.



Verse 14-16 – Light of the World

14 “You are the light of the world.

A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.”

15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Jesus is calling all Christians the light of the world. He is spoken of as the light of the world (John 8:12; 12:35, 36, 46). Jesus is the source of the light, true Christians reflect that light. Their role is to shine for Him, just as the moon reflects the glory of the sun.

The Christian is like a city set on a hill. It is high above its surroundings and it shines in the night. Those disciples who truly manifest the teachings of Christ cannot be hidden. People do not light a lamp and put it under a basket, obscuring the light. Instead, they put it on a lampstand to give light to all.

Jesus did not intend for us to keep the light of His teaching for ourselves, but that we should share it. We should let our light so shine that as people see our good works, they will glorify the Father in heaven. If we live by the example of unbelievers, we will always be miserable, and effectively in darkness.

If we are influenced by worldly authorities, we will always be restricted in our walk of faith. We will be pale shadows of what we should be; our lamps will be covered, or, worse yet, extinguished.

The emphasis is on the **ministry of Christian character**. People don’t usually read the Bible, they read the disciple.

**End of Lecture 4
Matthew Chapters 1-9**

Lecture 5

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
3. The Ministry of Christ
5. The Calling of the Disciples
- 4. The Requirements of Holy Living**
5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah

Reminder of the topics in Lesson 4

1. *The Beatitudes*: – Matthew 5:1-12
2. *Influence of True Disciples* – Matthew 5:13-16
3. *Laws & Principles of the Kingdom* – Matthew 5:17-48



4. *Practicality in the Life of Faith in the Kingdom; giving alms; charitable deeds – Matthew 6:1-4*
5. *Instructions concerning Prayer – Matthew 6:5-18*
6. *Fasting to be Seen Only by God – Matthew 6:19-24*
7. *True Treasure – Matthew 6:19-24*
8. *Cure for Anxiety – Matthew 6:25-34*
9. *Doing the Will of the Father; not judging others – Matthew 7:1-6*
10. *Encouragement to Pray – Matthew 7:7-11*
11. *The Golden Rule – Matthew 7:12*
12. *The Two Ways of Choice; the True and the False – Matthew 7:13-14*
13. *True and False Teachers; Both Known By Their Fruits – Matthew 7:15-20*
14. *True and False Professions – Matthew 7:21-23*
15. *True and False Foundations – Matthew 7:24-29*

Brief Commentary on the Laws and Principles of the Kingdom

3. *Laws and Principles of The Kingdom* – Matthew 5:17-48

Verses 17-18 – Christ Fulfills the Law

17 “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”

Mosaic Law ended at the cross as far as a means of justification, righteousness and salvation were concerned. However, Jesus upheld the Law of Moses and insisted it must be fulfilled.

Christ fulfils the righteousness of the Law **for** the believer and **in** the believer.

Therefore, the moral and spiritual implications of righteousness are fulfilled in us and through us by new life from Christ, through experience of new spiritual birth by the Holy Spirit. Consequently, believers have the power to live differently, well pleasing to the Lord.

Jesus upheld the inerrancy of Scripture by saying that not even the smallest Hebrew letter, ‘yod’, even the smallest stroke or hook of a letter or particle, which actually distinguishes different letters by the smallest dot, shall be removed. Jesus will rule by Law and the rod of iron in the Kingdom (Psalm 2 and Revelation 19:15).

Jesus believed in the literal inspiration of the Bible, even in what might seem unimportant details. Everything in the Bible is significant. Note: Jesus did not say the Law would never pass away; He said it would not pass away “until all was fulfilled.” This has implications for the believer today.



Verses 17-18 (Continued) – The Believer’s Relation to the Law

The Law was not given as a means of salvation (Acts 13:39; Romans; Galatians 2:16, 21; 3:11).

“Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.” Acts 13:38-39

The Law was designed to show people their sinfulness (Romans 3:20; 5:20; 7:7; 1 Corinthians 15:56; Galatians 3:19), and show them their dependence on God for Salvation.

“Therefore by the deeds of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Romans 3:20

The Law has attached to it the penalty of death (Galatians 3:10); to break one commandment is to be guilty of all of them (James 2:10). Since people break the Law, they are under the penalty of death. **God’s righteousness and holiness demands the penalty is paid.**

It was to pay this penalty by His own death that Jesus came into the world. He died as a substitute for all who deserve the death penalty. He died as a substitute for all guilty Law breakers, even though He Himself was sinless.

Jesus did not reject the Law as now irrelevant, rather He met the full demands of the Law by fulfilling its complete requirements, in both His sinless life and substitutionary death. In a real sense the Gospel is integral to the Law. And so the Gospel does not replace the Law, it upholds it.

The Gospel shows how the demands of the Law (death for transgression) have been fully satisfied by the redeeming ministry of Christ. **This is why it is known as the Gospel of Christ.**

Therefore if we believe and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ we are no longer under the penalty of the Law; we are under grace (Romans 6:14). The penalty of the Law must be paid only once for each of us. For those who believe in Christ who paid the penalty, the believer does not have to pay it.

It is in this sense that the Law has receded for the Christian (2 Corinthians 3:7-11). The Law taught us our sinful state until Christ came, but now this tutor is no longer needed. **Yet the Christian is not lawless.**

The Christian is bound by a much stronger claim than mere Law; **he is bound by the Call of Christ!** The Christian’s behaviour is not now constrained by fear of the penalty of death, but by an earnest desire to please His Saviour. Christ has become his rule (or law) of life (John 13:15; 15:12; Ephesians 5:1-2; 1 John 2:6; 3:16).

The ministry of the Law (and its penalties) to non-believers has not ended. Those who actively reject Christ will still have to pay the full penalty of the Law. The correct use of the Law is to produce the knowledge of sin and so lead to repentance. But the Law is not for those who are already saved (1 Timothy 1:8-11):



But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, 9 knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, ... 11 according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust. 1 Timothy 1:9-11

“And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21).

The righteousness demanded by the Law is fulfilled in those “who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Romans 8:4).

The teachings in the “Sermon on the Mount” set a much higher standard than the Law. For example, the Law says, “Do not murder.” Jesus says, “Don’t even think about it.” So the Sermon on the Mount not only upholds the Law and the Prophets, but raises the bar much higher.

Verses 19-20 – The Gospel is Greater than the Law

Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

The morality of the Kingdom must exceed Mosaic Law.

The act of murder is preceded by thoughts of anger and murder. Adultery is preceded by lustful thoughts. What is within a man decides what comes out of a man by action. So often the wrong use of words and anger bring damage and guilt on the victim.

Verses 21-22 – Murder Begins in the Heart

The word ‘racah’ is a word meaning empty-head or numbskull (usually translated ‘fool’). Use of the word ‘fool’ defines and denigrates a person created by God. People who use defamatory words are in danger of the fire of Gehenna (Gar-Hinnom) — a synonym for hell.

Gehenna is a reference to the valley where rubbish is disposed of, where fire burns to consume it. The city authorities used Sulphur to make everything burn with greater heat and intensity. Hence the reference to the “lake of fire and brimstone (Sulphur).”

The valley of Gehenna (Gar-Hinnom) was used for the sacrifice of children during Old Testament times, to the god Molech, by burning. This is a valley of southern Jerusalem and was cursed by God. So, by analogy, those who defame others are in danger of God’s curse and a destiny in hell.

Verses 23-26 – Be Reconciled

23 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way.



First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

25 Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. 26 Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny. Matthew 5:23-26

Verses 23-26 state the challenge to encourage reconciliation between people, then present gifts to the Lord. Here is the challenge to live transparent upright lives. Severe sin requires self-judgment. Deal with your adversary fairly but quickly, to avoid further trouble and condemnation by the Judge of all.

End of Lecture 5 Matthew Chapters 1-9

Lecture 6

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
3. The Ministry of Christ
5. The Calling of the Disciples
- 4. The Requirements of Holy Living**
5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah
6. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

Verses 27-30 – Adultery in the Heart

27 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’
28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”
29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

Verses 27 and 28 confirm the Mosaic Law about adultery (Exodus 20:14). A person might be proud never to have committed adultery, and yet have his eyes and mind full of adulterous thoughts.

The Law forbids the act of adultery, but Jesus forbids the inward desire.

So Jesus reminds His disciples the simple abstinence from the physical act is not enough, there must be inward purity. If you think or act adulterously, you do not satisfy the sex urge. You are behaving like someone who pours oil on a fire in a misguided attempt to quench it. Sin begins in the mind, and if we indulge it, we eventually commit the act.



Verses 29-30 demand inward purity. Inward purity demand strict discipline. Hence Jesus taught that if any part of our body causes us to sin, it were better to lose it than our eternal salvation. Jesus was speaking figuratively, since the Holy Spirit enables the believer to live a holy life. However, this requires full cooperation and strict discipline on the believer's part.

Verses 31-32 – Only Reason for Divorce

31 “Furthermore it has been said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ 32 But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.”

Jesus makes His statement that sexual unfaithfulness allows for divorce. Under OT Law divorce was permitted, not for adultery (adultery was punishable by death), but for dislike, or incompatibility. The woman could be cast off on a whim.

In the Kingdom of Christ, however, anyone who divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality **causes her to commit adultery**. This does not mean that she automatically becomes an adulteress. It means that, with no means of support, she would be forced to live with another man.

In so doing she becomes an adulteress. Then, not only is the former wife living in adultery, whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery. The subject of divorce and remarriage is one of the most difficult and complicated subjects in the Bible.

Discourse on Divorce and Remarriage

Divorce was never God's intention for Mankind. His ideal, the gold standard, is that one man and one woman remain married until “death do them part” (Romans 7:2-3). Jesus made this clear to the Pharisees by appealing to the divine order at Creation (Matthew 19:4-6).

God hates divorce Matthew (Malachi 2:16), that is, unscriptural divorce. God does not hate all divorce because He Himself divorced Israel (Jeremiah 3:8). This was because Israel abandoned Him and committed spiritual adultery with other gods.

This led Israel into terrible physical sins, such as child sacrifice. Israel was unfaithful to her holy Husband. In Matthew 5:31-32 and 19:9, Jesus taught that divorce was forbidden, except when one of the spouses had been guilty of sexual immorality.

In Mark 10:11-12, and Luke 16:18, the exception clause is omitted. This discrepancy is probably best explained by neither Mark nor Luke having recorded the entire saying. John omits mention of it at all. Therefore, even though divorce is not the ideal, it is permitted where a spouse has been unfaithful in adultery.

Jesus *allows* divorce in this case, but He does *not command* it.

Some commentators teach that 1 Corinthians 7:12-16 means that divorce is acceptable when a believer is deserted by an unbeliever.

Paul says that the innocent person is, “not under bondage in such cases,” that is, he or she is free to seek a divorce for desertion. It can be deduced that this is the same exception clause



found in Matthew 5:31-32 and 19:9, that is, the unbeliever deserts his or her spouse and goes to live with someone else.

In conclusion, the believer may be granted a divorce on the scriptural ground of adultery outside the marriage. It is often argued that, although divorce is permitted in the New Testament, remarriage is not mentioned. This argument commits the philosophical error of “begging the question.”

Remarriage is not condemned for the innocent party, only for the offending party. Additionally, one of the main purposes of scriptural divorce is to permit remarriage for the innocent party; otherwise separation would suffice, but in that case both parties would be injured for the sins of the one.

In all discussions on this subject, the question always comes up, “What about those who were divorced before they came to faith?” There is no question that unscriptural (i.e.: sinful) divorces and remarriages, carried out before repentance and salvation, are sins that have been completely forgiven.

In 1 Corinthians 6:11, Paul includes adultery in the list of sins in which the Corinthians had formerly participated. Pre-salvation sins do not prevent those believers from full participation in the fellowship of Christ and the local church.

A more difficult question is the case of **believers** who have divorced for unscriptural reasons and then remarry. If these people are now living in a state of adultery, then they would not only have to leave their present partner, but also confess their sin and repent of the situation that led to it.

God’s solution to a problem is never one that creates a worse situation. If, in order to untangle such a situation, men and women are driven into more sin, or women and children are left homeless and without proper support, the cure is worse than the disease.

In this author’s opinion, Christians who have been unscripturally divorced and remarried are able to repent of their sin and be restored to the Lord and the fellowship of the local church. However, the sin must be truly repented, and never repeated.

In the matter of divorce and remarriage, almost every case is different. Therefore each case must be evaluated individually against Scripture. If disciplinary action must be taken, then everyone involved must submit to the decision of the church elders.

Back to the Commentary on Matthew Chapters 5-7

Verses 33-37 – Jesus Forbids Oaths

33 “Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ 34 But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne;

35 nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is



more than these is from the evil one.”

So how do these verses apply to us today?

In Matthew 5:33-37 Jesus teaches that no oath should be necessary for believers and life in the Kingdom. The Mosaic Law contains prohibitions against swearing *falsely* by the name of God (Leviticus 19:12; Numbers 30:2; Deuteronomy 23:21).

Also, more importantly, the third commandment forbids taking the name of the LORD in vain:

“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.” Exodus 20:7

To swear by the name of God meant that He was your witness that you were telling the truth. The Israelites avoided any presumption in the idea of swearing by the name of God, by substituting other words in their oaths; such as by heaven, or by the earth, or by Jerusalem, and even by one’s own head, or by the lives of one’s children.

Jesus exposes such hypocrisy for what it is and forbids any such swearing or oath-taking in regular conversation. It is useless and very hypocritical to try to avoid swearing by God’s name by the substitution of another name. For example, to swear by heaven is to swear by God’s throne.

And to swear by the earth is to swear by his footstool; to swear by Jerusalem is to swear by His holy city; and to swear by one’s own head or children involves God, because He is the Creator and Father of all. Taking an oath by anyone or anything ultimately comes back to taking the Lord’s name in vain.

In verse 37 Jesus teaches that no oath should be necessary for believers and life in the Kingdom. Speak the truth, say yes or no and mean it. To use stronger language is an acknowledgement of fear that Satan, the father of lies, might be controlling our words. There are no circumstances under which it is permitted to lie.

This passage also forbids any shading of the truth or deception. Take special care in giving a solemn promise. Can you keep your word, Jesus implies—and take care, say and do nothing rash that cannot be fulfilled.

This stricture does not apply to the taking of oaths in a court of law (Matthew 26:63ff; 2 Cor 1:23; Gal 1:20).

Verses 38-42 – Go the Second Mile

38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ 39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.

41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.”



In these verses Jesus denies the right of revenge: do not resist evil; turn the other cheek; go the second mile; give generously. *Jesus Himself did not resist the cross.*

In the present, these high standards of behaviour are rarely achieved by believers. In the Millennial Kingdom these high standards of behaviour will be enforced if needed. There will be unsaved born in the Millennium who would like to rebel against Christ but cannot do so.

Note: What will work in the Millennial Kingdom might not work in the interim between the advents—during the mystery form of the Kingdom, when the King is absent, as now. The Bible does not support pacifism now. The above are the ideals which will govern His Kingdom.

Verses 43-48 – Love Your enemies

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Citizens of the Kingdom are called upon to love their enemies (v 44-48). In verse 48, perfection here means uprightness, maturity and sincerity of character in godly living. Sinless perfection at present on this earth is impossible, but godliness is a biblical concept and is possible.

End of Lecture 6 Matthew Chapters 1-9

Lecture 7

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
3. The Ministry of Christ
5. The Calling of the Disciples
- 4. The Requirements of Holy Living**
5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah
6. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

4. Practicality in the Life of Faith in the Kingdom; giving alms; charitable deeds



Verses 6:1-4 – Do Good to Please God

“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.”

Wealth to the Jewish people, especially their leaders was important. They thought it was a sign of blessing from God. ‘No!’ said Jesus, you cannot serve God and mammon - you cannot serve and honour the Lord and at the same time make materialism into a god.

Jesus gave three areas in the practice of righteousness, where the Pharisees, by open display, perverted true worship, and turned it into an effort to gain public approval.

- Almsgiving (vv. 2-4);
- Prayer (vv. 5-15);
- Fasting (vv. 16-18)

Verse 1 states the general principle regarding the motive of righteousness, which is then developed by these three examples. **Motives that underlie words and deeds give them their true moral quality, whether righteousness or the opposite.**

God as Father is referred to seventeen times in the Sermon on the Mount. Inward humility, having a contrite heart is honoured by the Father who rewards openly. **These verses contain the answer to anxiety.** Believers are called to trust and serve God. He promises to meet all needs.

5. Instructions Concerning Prayer

Verses 6:5-15 – Pray with Sincerity

When we pray, don’t pray like the hypocrites who stand on street corners, flaunting their self-righteousness. We should go into our room and shut the door, and pray genuinely and directly to God in secret (vv. 5-6) not looking for the approval of others. God who sees genuine prayer will reward openly.

When we pray, don’t use vain repetitions like the heathens do (v. 7). This means those Gentiles who felt obligated to name all the attributes of the various gods so as not to leave out the appropriate one, and offend the gods. See 1 Kings 18:26-28.

God is always more ready to hear than we are to pray. He already knows our needs, as well as our ignorance in making proper requests (v. 8). Prayer is communion, not a battering ram used to break down the door to God’s treasure house.

It is a means by which the child of the Father receives that which He is already prepared to give. Prayer opens up to us God’s willingness. Through prayer we recall personal needs and



develop an attitude of dependent trust, ready to receive God's gifts, and **to yield in open trust and praise to His demands.**

The Lord's Prayer (vv. 9-13) is also preserved by Luke (Luke 11:2-4) and begins with "Our Father" which suggests that the prayer is to be used corporately. The body of the prayer is developed in two main parts.

The first part has three petitions concerning the glory of God:

- 1) The hallowing of His name (v. 9);
- 2) The consummation of His kingly reign (v. 10);
- 3) The fulfilment of His reign on earth, as in heaven (v. 10);

The second part has three petitions concerning the personal needs of His disciples:

- 4) Provision (v. 11);
- 5) Pardon (v. 12);
- 6) Protection (v. 13).

The Lord's Prayer:

8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

Since our Father knows the things which we need, we can ask why pray at all? The answer is that in our prayers we are acknowledging our dependence on Him. God does things in answer to prayer that otherwise He would not do.

***9 In this manner, therefore, pray:
'Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.***

Here we have the opening of the Lord's Prayer. We should remember that Jesus never prayed this exact prayer Himself. It was given to His disciples as a model after which they could pattern their own prayers. It was not given as the exact words to use, because many repetitions can become rote prayers with empty phrases.

***10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.***

Your kingdom come! We should always pray for God's will to be done in all things, but specifically we should pray for the day when the Lord Jesus Christ will return and set up His kingdom on earth, to mirror the heavenly kingdom.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

After putting God's interests first and Acknowledging who He is, we are now permitted to present our own needs. This petition to God acknowledges our dependence on God for daily food, both physical and spiritual.

12 And forgive us our trespasses,



As we forgive those who trespass against us.

This does not refer to the judicial forgiveness as we accept Christ and His atoning sacrifice, but refers to the parental forgiveness from the Father towards His children.

If believers are unwilling to forgive those who wrong them, how can they expect to receive forgiveness from their Lord from heaven (See verses 14-15) below, and Matthew 18:21-35 – The King Settles Accounts.

13a And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one...

This request (v.13a) may appear to contradict James 1:13, which states that God would never tempt anyone. However, God does allow His people to be tested and tried.

The petition is expressing a serious distrust of one's own ability and strength to resist temptations, or to stand up under trial. Again it is an expression of complete dependence on God for preservation.

13b...For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'

The doxology, (v. 13b) is not in some manuscripts (the NA and UBS critical texts) but it is in the majority of manuscripts. It is patterned after David's prayer (1 Chr. 29:11-13), and is the perfect ending to the model prayer.

14 For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.
15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Verses 14 and 15 are often overlooked by many, the command to forgive and its consequences.

They serve as a further explanation to verse 12. They are not part of the prayer itself, but are inseparable from it. They are added to emphasize that the parental forgiveness mentioned in verse 12 is conditional upon our attitude and behaviour. This Model prayer summarizes the teaching of Jesus about God's kingdom, and serves as a pattern for all prayer.

6. Fasting to be Seen Only by God

6:16-18 – Fasting Before God Not Men

16 "Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

The third form of religious hypocrisy that Jesus condemns is openly creating an ***appearance of fasting***.

Verse 16: The Hypocrites disfigure their faces in order to look gaunt and haggard, as an



indication of how severe is their fast. Jesus states clearly that such an attempt to appear holy is ludicrous.

Verses 17-18: True believers should fast in secret and ensure their appearance is that of normal people. It is enough that the Father knows; His reward is what matters.

Discourse on Fasting

To fast is to abstain from any physical appetite. It may be voluntary, as Jesus teaches here, or involuntary, as in Acts 27:33 or 2 Corinthians 11:27).

And as day was about to dawn, Paul implored them all to take food, saying, “Today is the fourteenth day you have waited and continued without food, and eaten nothing...”
Acts 27:33

In the New Testament, fasting is associated with mourning (Matthew 9:14-15) and prayer (Luke 2:37; Acts 14:23). In these passages, fasting went together with prayer, as an indication of one’s earnestness in discerning the will of God. However, fasting has no salvation merit, neither does it give a Christian special standing before God.

A Pharisee once openly boasted that he fasted twice a week, but it failed to bring him the justification he wanted (Luke 18:12, 14). BUT, when a Christian fasts secretly as a spiritual exercise, God sees and rewards. Whilst fasting is not commanded in the New Testament, it is encouraged by promise of reward. It can aid one’s prayer life by taking away dullness and drowsiness.

Fasting is valuable in times of crisis, when someone wishes to discern the will of God. It is valuable in promoting self-discipline. Fasting is between an individual and God. It should only be carried out with a desire to please Him. It loses its value when it is imposed externally as some kind of religious duty, or publicly displayed out of the wrong motives.

End of Lecture 7 of Matthew Chapters 1-9

Lecture 8

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
3. The Ministry of Christ
4. **The Requirements of Holy Living**
5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah
6. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

Back to the Commentary on Matthew

Matthew 6:19-21 – True Treasure



19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

This passage contains some of the most revolutionary teachings of Jesus—and some of the most neglected. In these verses (vv. 19-21) Jesus contravenes all human advice to provide for a financially secure future. When He says, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth...” He means there is no security in material things.

Any type of material treasure on earth can be destroyed either by the elements (rust, moths, etc.) or stolen. Jesus is teaching that the only treasure (investments) not subject to loss are treasures in heaven. Paul writes:

I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day. 2 Timothy 1:12b

The new way of life demands the abandonment of commitment to earthly treasures (vv. 19-24). The only true treasures are heavenly ones (vv. 19-20). Citizens of the kingdom must be single minded in devotion to God (vv. 22-24), and ambition must be directed towards God’s kingdom and righteousness, since God can be trusted to provide the necessities.

By seeking the kingdom of God above all else, one carries on the struggle for existence in the proper way (v. 33; cf. Luke 12:15-21).

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Matthew 6:33

Hence, freedom from worry, which is born of sincere faith in God’s overruling providence, marks kingdom citizens.

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble. Matthew 6:34

In summary: If your money is in a bank, or under the bed, then your heart and desire are also there. If your treasures are in heaven, your interest will be centred there.

This teaching forces us to decide whether Jesus meant what He said.

If Jesus meant what He said, then we face the question,
“What are we going to do with our earthly treasures?”

If He didn’t mean what He said, then we face the question,
“What are we going to do with our Bible?”

The Lamp of the Body – Matthew 6:22-23

22 “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of



darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”
Matthew 6:22-23

Jesus realised that it would be very difficult for His disciples to understand His teaching on ‘true treasure’ and security for the future. So He used an analogy of the human eye to teach a lesson on spiritual understanding. It is through the eye that the body receives illumination and can see.

If the eye is good, then the whole body is flooded with light. **But if the eye is bad**, then vision is impaired. Instead of light, there is darkness.

The application is this: The good eye belongs to a person whose motives are pure, who desires God’s will, and who is willing to accept Christ’s teachings in their fulness.

That person’s whole life is flooded with light: he believes Jesus’ words and forsakes earthly riches; he lays up treasures in heaven; and he knows this is the only true security. On the other hand, the bad eye belongs to the person who is trying to live in two worlds.

He doesn’t want to let go of his earthly treasures, yet he wants treasures in heaven as well. The teachings of Jesus seem impractical and impossible to him. He lacks clear guidance since he is full of darkness. Jesus adds the rider that if the light in you is actually darkness, **how great is that darkness!**

In other words, if you know that Christ teaches not to trust earthly treasures for security (salvation), yet you do it anyway, then the teaching you have failed to obey becomes darkness — a very intense form of spiritual blindness. You cannot see riches in the true perspective.

Being rich is not the problem. It is our attitude towards riches that is the problem—the good eye or the bad eye. Scripture tells us that we must provide for our families:

“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” 1 Timothy 5:8

God provides for our needs and those of our families. Beyond that, Jesus is teaching that if we are fortunate enough to become rich, we must remember that salvation does not lie in earthly riches. They cannot be trusted.

Abraham was rich in his day, but he also trusted God and was obedient to His commands.

Cannot Serve Two Masters— Matthew 6:24

24 “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”
Matthew 6:24

This is a forceful summary of Jesus’ teaching on *True Treasure*, in terms of masters and slaves!

No-one can faithfully serve two masters. One will inevitably take precedence over the other,



in terms of loyalty and obedience. So it is with God and Mammon. They represent rival claims and a choice must be made. Either we put God first and reject materialism, or we live for temporary things, and refuse God's call on our lives.

Earthly riches and treasures: they cannot save you, and they have no use in heaven.



8. Cure for Anxiety – Matthew 6:25-34

On the previous basis of singleness of devotion in three areas:

- A single treasure (vv. 19-21);
- A single vision (vv. 22-23);
- A single master (v. 24);

The believer enjoys complete confidence in God's providence, which frees him from anxiety.

Do Not Worry – Verse 25

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”

In this verse Jesus addresses the tendency to centre our lives around food and clothing.

It's not so much about what we will eat and wear today, but about what we shall eat and wear in 10 or 20 years from now. Such worry about the future is actually sinful, because it denies the love, wisdom and power of God.

In effect, such worry **denies the love of God**, by implying that He doesn't care for us, so we have to take care of ourselves.

It **denies God's wisdom**, by assuming that He doesn't know what He is doing,

It **denies His power**, by assuming that He isn't able to provide for our needs.

The Birds of the Air – Verse 26

Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

The analogy of the birds of the air illustrates God's care for His creatures. The bird's



themselves demonstrate how unnecessary it is to worry.

They neither sow nor reap, yet God feeds them, and since in God's hierarchy of creation we are more valuable than birds, then we can trust God to provide for our needs.

This does not mean, however, that we need not work for our present needs. The analogy must not be taken too far or out of context.

Paul reminds us that:

“If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.” 2 Thessalonians 3:10

We must also not take it that farmers should forego planting, growing and harvesting food. These are an essential part of providing for current needs.

What Jesus is here forbidding is building more barns in an attempt to provide for a future independent of God. This is a practice that Jesus condemns in the parable of the rich farmer in Luke 12:16-21, where the farmer's accumulation of barns, or wealth, was futile, since he would die very soon (that night).

The Scripture Union Daily Notes deftly summarizes verse 26 like this:

The argument is that if God sustains, **without** their conscious participation, creatures of a lower order, He will all the more sustain, **with** their active participation, those for whom creation took place.” (My emphasis)

Worry Cannot Raise Stature— Matthew 6:27

Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

Worry about the future is not only dishonoring God — it is futile. Jesus demonstrates this by His question. A short person cannot extend his height by worrying. Yet it would be easier to do just that, than worry into existence all the provisions for our future needs.

The Lilies of the Field— Matthew 6:28-30

28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?”

Jesus is here dealing with the unreasonable attitude of worrying if we will have enough clothing in the future. The beauty of the lilies of the field surpasses even the rich clothing of a king. If God provides such beauty for wildflowers, He will certainly care for His people who worship and serve Him.

Conclusion – Matthew 6:31-32



31 “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

The simple conclusion is that we should not spend our lives in anxiety over food, drink and clothing.

Gentiles who do not know the Lord, live their lives as if food and clothing were the whole of life, and work to accumulate material things. It should not be like that for Christians who have a heavenly Father who knows their basic needs.

If Christians were to give themselves to the task of providing all their future needs in advance, then all their time and energy would be devoted to the accumulation of wealth (Mammon). They could never be sure they had saved enough, because there is always the danger of market collapse, theft, inflation, catastrophe, prolonged illness, paralyzing accident, etc.

This means God would be robbed of the service of His people. The real purpose for which they were created and redeemed would be missed. Men and women bearing the divine image would be living for an uncertain future on this earth, when they should be living with eternity’s values in view, no matter their circumstances.

Conclusion – Matthew 6:33-34

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

The Lord now makes a covenant with His disciples. He is saying, in effect, “If you put God’s interests first in your life, I will guarantee your future needs.”

If you seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, then I will see you never lack the necessities of life. This is God’s social security programme. The believer’s responsibility is to live for the Lord, trusting God for the future, with unshakeable confidence in Him.

Our jobs and careers are simply a means of providing for current needs. Everything above that can be invested in the work of the Lord.

We are called to live one day at a time — tomorrow can worry about its own troubles.
Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

The Lord Jesus Christ also spoke about the world’s troubles, and reminded us of this truth:

“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

**End of Lecture 8
of**



Matthew Chapters 1-9

Lecture 9

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
3. The Ministry of Christ
4. **The Requirements of Holy Living**
5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah
6. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

Do Not Judge – Matthew 7:1-6

This section on judging others follows immediately on Jesus' teaching concerning pursuit of earthly wealth. The connection between these two themes is very important. Remember that Jesus is primarily instructing His disciples. It is easy for the Christians who have taken Jesus' teachings seriously, and have forsaken all worldly wealth, to criticize and judge wealthy Christians.

On the other hand, Christians who take seriously their duty to provide for their families, sometimes tend to downplay the literalness of Jesus' teachings in Chapter 6. Remember, this is still the Sermon on the Mount. Since no-one lives completely by faith, such criticisms are out of order, as Jesus Himself points out in the current passage under consideration.

Chapter 7 contrasts the true and the false ways of life – doing the will of the Father, or not. Here is a chapter showing principles of right actions. Beware hypocrisy (vv. 1-5). Before judging others, look at one's own faults first—there is no place for it in the future Kingdom, and no place for it now. Let us look at the Scripture (vv.1-5):

- 1 "Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. 3 And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?"
- 4 "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

What is Included in this Command?

This command not to judge others includes the following:

1. We should not judge motives. Only God can read them.
2. We should not judge by appearance (Jn 7:24; Jas 2:1-4).
3. We should not judge those who have real scruples about matters that are not in themselves right or wrong, or do not affect Doctrine (Romans 14:1-10).
4. We should not judge the service of another Christian (1 Corinthians 4:1-5).
5. We should not judge a fellow believer by speaking evil about him or her (James 4:11-12).



However, discernment of unrighteousness is not judgment.

Verse 1 *“Judge not, that you be not judged.”*

Sometimes the command not to judge is misconstrued by some people to forbid any kind of judgment. We frequently hear, “Judge not, lest you be judged.” However, Jesus is not teaching that we should be undiscerning Christians. He never intended that we give up our critical faculties or our discernment.

The NT has many examples of the legitimate judgment of the condition, conduct or teaching certain people. Also, there are many areas in which a Christian is commanded to decide between good and bad, to discriminate between good and better (or best!). Let us look at some of these areas:

1. When disputes arise between believers, they should be settled in the church, before members who are qualified to settle the matter (1 Corinthians 6:1-8).
2. The local church is to judge any serious sins of its members and take the proper action (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13).
3. Believers are to judge the doctrinal teachings of preachers and teachers by the Word of God (Matthew 7:15-20; 1 Corinthians 14:29; 1 John 4:1; Acts 17:11).
4. Christians must discern if others are true believers to obey Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:14 (Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers).
5. Those in the church must judge which men have the qualifications to be elders and deacons (1 Timothy 3:1-13).
6. We are commanded to discern the unruly, the fainthearted, the weak, etc., and treat them according to the instruction in the Bible (e.g.: 1 Thessalonians 5:14).

Verse 2 *“For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.”*

Jesus warns that unrighteous judgment will be repaid in kind. This principle of reaping what we sow is common to all human life and conduct.

Mark applies the same principle to the use of God’s Word:

24 Then He said to them, “Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use [God’s Word], it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.
25 For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.” (Mark 4:24-25): (My interpolation)

Similarly Luke applies the principle to our generosity in alms giving:

“Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.” (Luke 6:38)

Continuing with our text: Verses 3-5

3 *“And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the*



plank in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

Jesus is drawing our attention to seeing a small fault in someone else whilst ignoring the same yet greater fault in ourselves. He used hyperbole (exaggeration) to make His point. Someone with a plank (beam) of wood in his eye often finds fault with the speck (splinter) of wood in the eye of another.

It is hypocritical to think that we can criticise, or advise, or help someone with a fault, when we ourselves have a greater fault. We must put right our own faults and failings before attempting to address faults in others.

Verse 6 "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces."

Verse 6 stands alone and warns concerning the sharing of Truth. Would it be welcomed or scorned, trusted or trampled on? Discern whether the Truth of the Kingdom life would be appreciated, valued and welcomed.

This verse 6 shows that Jesus did not intend to forbid every kind of judgment. He warned His disciples not to give holy things to dogs, or to cast pearls before swine. Under Mosaic Law dogs and swine were unclean animals, and here they are used as an analogy for wicked people, on whom we must exercise judgment (discernment).

When we meet unholy people, who treat divine truths with complete and utter contempt, and respond to our claims about Christ with abuse, and sometimes violence, we are not under any obligation to continue sharing the Gospel with them.

To continue would only bring about increased anger, sin, and condemnation in those people.

Quite obviously it requires spiritual perception to discern when we are speaking to such people, and not to someone with a simple reluctance to engage with the Gospel—which may be approached later.

Perhaps that is why the next section, Matthew 7:7-11, takes up the subject of prayer, through which we can ask for wisdom.

Encouragement to Pray – Matthew 7: 7-11

This passage, which is about encouragement to pray, is opened by the threefold command to persevere:

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."
Matthew 7:7-8

Ask. Seek. Knock. God welcomes prayer. Be a persistent petitioner. God cares. He knows our



needs before we ask Him or seek His face. So why pray, may one ask?

If we think we can live out the moral principles of the kingdom in our own strength, we have not fully grasped the supernatural nature of the life to which we are called.

So Jesus tells us to ask and keep on asking; to seek and to keep on seeking; to knock and to keep on knocking. Wisdom and power for the Christian life will be given to all who seriously and persistently pray for it.

If verses 7 and 8 are taken out of context, they might seem like a blank cheque to get anything we ask for.

However, this is not a blank cheque. We need to understand the immediate context, and what the Bible as a whole says about prayer. What seem like open promises in this passage are restricted and qualified by other passages. For example, Psalm 66:18 tells us that the person praying must have no unconfessed sin in his life:

If I regard iniquity in my heart,
The Lord will not hear. Psalm 66:18

A Christian must pray: ***In faith*** (James 1:6-8) and ***in conformity with the will of God*** (1 John 5:14). Prayer must be offered ***persistently*** (Luke 18:1-8) and ***sincerely*** (Hebrews 10:22a).

Our passage continues with:

9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! Matthew 7:9-11

When the conditions for prayer are met, the Christian can have complete confidence that God will hear and answer. This assurance is based on the character of God—our Father. Jesus gives a human example: if a son asks his earthly father for bread, he will not receive a stone, nor a serpent if he had asked for a fish.

Jesus is arguing from the lesser to the greater. An earthly father would not deceive a hungry child, or give him anything dangerous. By analogy, if human parents give good things, how much more will our Father in heaven give for our good.

Golden Rule for Life in the Kingdom – Matthew 7:12

Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

This verse begins with the word “Therefore.” It is the summary of Jesus’ teaching on prayer. The obvious connection with the preceding verses is that, since our Father is a giver of good things to us, we should imitate Him by showing kindness to others.

Do for others what you would expect them to do for you. This is the will of God. A good test of whether an action is beneficial to others is to ask ourselves, “Would we want such an action done to us?”

Christianity is not just refraining from sin, it is positive goodness.



Jesus states that this “Golden Rule” is the Law and the Prophets. That is, it summarizes the Law of Moses and the writings of the Prophets of Israel. The righteousness commanded throughout the Old Testament is fulfilled in regenerated, born again believers, who walk according to the Spirit (Romans 8:4).

**End of Lecture 9
of
Matthew Chapters 1-9**

Lecture 10

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
3. The Ministry of Christ
4. **The Requirements of Holy Living**
5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah
6. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

Here is a reminder of the 15-point overview of the topics covered in Lesson 4:

1. *The Beatitudes*: – Matthew 5:1-12
2. *Influence of True Disciples* – Matthew 5:13-16
3. *Laws & Principles of the Kingdom* – Matthew 5:17-48
4. *Practicality in the Life of Faith in the Kingdom; giving alms; charitable deeds* – Matthew 6:1-4
5. *Instructions concerning Prayer* – Matthew 6:5-18
6. *Fasting to be Seen Only by God*– Matthew 6:19-24
7. *True Treasure* – Matthew 6:19-24
8. *Cure for Anxiety* – Matthew 6:25-34
9. *Do Not Judge* – Matthew 7:1-6
10. *Encouragement to Pray* – Matthew 7:7-11
11. *The Golden Rule* – Matthew 7:12

These are the four we have yet to examine:

12. *The Two Ways of Choice; the True and the False* – Matthew 7:13-14
13. *True and False Teachers; Both Known By Their Fruits* – Matthew 7:15-20
14. *True and False Professions* – Matthew 7:21-23
15. *True and False Foundations* – Matthew 7:24-29

Two Ways of Choice – Matthew 7:13-14

13 “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

The narrow way leads to a life which pleases and depends upon the Lord. The broad way of being independent from God leads to judgment and destruction. The narrow way following



the Lord is difficult and thus most people turn away from this way. Only a few are willing to accept the ways of the Lord and His Kingdom life. Few find righteousness and life, yet it is the one acceptable way to the Father.

The Lord is warning us about the **narrow gate** of Christian discipleship, and the **way is difficult**; but those who faithfully follow His teachings receive **eternal life**.

On the other hand, those who go in by the **wide gate** and take the **easy way of self-indulgence** in a life of selfishness and pleasure will **reap destruction**.

In these verses, Jesus is talking about failure to live out the purpose of one's created existence. These verses have an application to the Gospel by describing the two alternatives and the destinies of the human race. But, while this is a valid application of the passage for unbelievers, the interpretation is for believers.

Jesus gives the interpretation that to follow Him would require faith, discipline, and endurance. Although difficult, the narrow way is the only life worth leading.

If anyone chooses the broad and easy way, they will have plenty of company going with them, but they will forfeit God's salvation.

True And False Teachers; Both Known by Their Fruits – Matthew 7:15-23

Known by Their Fruits (vv. 15-20)

15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

Whenever the hard demands of true discipleship are taught, there will always be false prophets and false teachers who preach the wide gate and the easy way.

They water down the truth until, as Charles Spurgeon said; "There is not enough left to make soup for a sick grasshopper." These false teachers claim to be speaking for God, but are wolves in sheep's clothing, giving only the appearance of true believers. They are vicious unbelievers who are preying on the sheep, attempting to destroy their faith.

Verses 16-18 deal with how to detect false prophets and teachers: "You will know them by their fruits." Their profligate lives and destructive teachings expose them for what they are. Jesus uses everyday analogies to describe this: a tree or plant produces fruit according to its character and kind.

Thornbushes do not bear grapes and thistles do not bear figs. A good tree bears good fruit and a bad tree bears bad fruit. This principle is true in the natural world and the spiritual world. The life and teaching of those who claim to speak for God should be tested by the Word of God.

"To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20



Verses 19 and 20 describes the ultimate destiny of false prophets and false teachers, that is: “swift destruction” (2 Peter 2:1). They can be revealed by their fruits.

I never Knew You – Matthew 7:21-23

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ 23 And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

Verses 21-23 say, ‘beware false profession’, similarly. ‘Not everyone who says Lord, Lord, enters the Kingdom of Heaven’. Some ‘professors’ may cast out demons and do wonderful arts, prophesy or teach in the name of Jesus. Jesus knows those who are His through redemption by the blood. Let all who name Him, depart from iniquity and sin.

The ultimate test is obedience to the Father’s will. This not salvation by works, but it does teach that works are fruits or evidences found in the true disciple, a true subject of the King and His Kingdom, giving all the honour and glory to the King. To those who are not known by Him as His redeemed subjects He will say, “I never knew you,” when He comes.

On judgment day, when unbelievers stand before Christ (Revelation 20:11-15), many will claim that in His name they prophesied, or cast out demons, or performed many wonders. Jesus will declare that He never knew them, or acknowledged them as his own. From these verses we know that not every miracle is of divine origin.

This also means that not all miracle workers are divinely accredited. A miracle simply means that a supernatural power is at work: divine or satanic. Satan may empower his workers to cast out demons temporarily, in order to create the illusion that the miracle is divine. In such a case he is not working against himself, but plotting an even worse invasion of demons in the future.

True and False Foundations – Matthew 7:24-29

Build on the Rock – Matthew 7:24-27

24 “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

26 “But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

28 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, 29 for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Jesus closes His teaching discourse, the Sermon on the Mount, with a parable which emphasizes the importance of obedience.



Anyone who would become a true disciple is to build real Kingdom life on the Rock, Christ Jesus. He is the only solid foundation, eternal and true. Paul writes in Ephesians:

19 ...but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. Ephesians 2:19-22

This is the only foundation which can stand during all the storms of life here in this world, being ready in this life for the Kingdom life, beginning even now. If a person lives according to the principles of the Sermon on the Mount, the world calls him a fool; Jesus calls him a wise man.

The world calls someone a wise man who lives by earthly considerations, who lives for the present, and who lives for self. Jesus calls such a person a fool. He uses the analogy of the wise and foolish builders to illustrate the Gospel. The wise man puts his full confidence and trust in the Rock, Jesus Christ, Lord and Saviour.

The foolish man refuses to repent and rejects Jesus, his only hope of salvation. The interpretation of the parable takes us beyond our immediate salvation, into the practical embrace of the Christian life.

The People Astonished – Matthew 7:28-29

28 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, 29 for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

As the Lord Jesus ended His discourse, the people were astonished at His teaching.

If we read the Sermon on the Mount and are not astonished at its revolutionary, supernatural, character, then we have failed to grasp Jesus' intent. The people present recognized a difference between Jesus' teaching and that of the Scribes. He spoke with authority, whereas their words were powerless.

This is a masterful address, having the stamp of Divine authority because it is given by the Divine Son and King. Never had such words been heard in Israel. The teaching of Christ is the Truth of God and not as the Scribes who handed on down what they had been taught themselves.

His was the true voice; theirs merely an echo. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown comment:

“The consciousness of divine authority, as Lawgiver, Expounder and Judge, so beamed [shone] through His teaching, that the Scribes' teaching could not but appear drivelling in such a light.”

(Jamieson, Fausset and Brown,
*Critical and Explanatory Commentary
on the New Testament*, V:50.)

End of Lecture 10 of Matthew Chapters 1-9



Lecture 11

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
3. The Ministry of Christ
4. The Requirements of Holy Living
5. **The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah**
6. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

Lesson 5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah

The Credentials of the King – Matthew 8:1 - 9:38

Could Jesus have the power to bring change and establish His Kingdom? The principles of Kingdom life in chapters 5 to 7 are followed by the mighty works of Jesus as credentials of His Messiahship and Kingship. These mighty works of Jesus are categorized as follows:

<i>His Power over Disease</i>	<i>His Power over Nature</i>
<i>His Power over Sin</i>	<i>His Power over Death</i>

The King Demonstrates His Power over Disease – Matthew 8:1-17

Verse 1 summarizes the purpose of Jesus, by referring to Isaiah 53:4-6 where the suffering Messiah is prophesied to bear the sins and sicknesses of Israel. It would seem as though this reference applied to Israel, because they were the credentials of Israel's Messiah.

Isaiah 53:4-6 seem to relate to Israel initially, as Isaiah was a prophet to Israel, with a particular reference to the 'chastisement of Israel's peace' that was upon their suffering Messiah. No other nation has ever had God's peace upon them, only Israel.

The statement in Isaiah 53:5, "with His stripes we are healed," can never be used by Gentiles to claim automatic physical healing from all sicknesses. There is much sickness in the world even among Christians. Yet, clearly this must refer to spiritual healing of the broken relationship between sinners and a Holy God.

This spiritual healing comes about through the vicarious suffering of the Messiah for the sins of Israel and the nations. "He bore the sins of many" (v12). In these chapters the Lord Jesus presents conclusive evidence to Israel that He was indeed the Messiah spoken of by the prophets.

For example, Isaiah had foretold that the Messiah would open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, heal the lame, and make the mute sing (Isaiah 35:5-6).

Jesus, by fulfilling all these prophecies, proved He was the Messiah of Israel.

Israel knew the Scriptures and should have had no difficulty in identifying Jesus as the prophesied Messiah. But there are none so blind as those who cannot, or will not, see. The following events recorded in these chapters are presented in a thematic way, not in chronological order.



This is not a complete account of the Lord's ministry, but a presentation of events to demonstrate certain themes in the life of Jesus the Messiah. Included in this presentation are four general evidences of Christ's Messiahship:

1. Christ's absolute authority over disease, demons, death, and nature itself.
2. His claim to absolute Lordship over the lives of those who claim to follow Him.
3. The mounting rejection of Jesus by the nation of Israel, particularly by the religious leaders.
4. The ready reception of the Saviour by individual Gentiles.

Healing of the Leper – Matthew 8:1-4

1 When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. 2 And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." 3 Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4 And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

The leper addresses Jesus as 'Lord', recognizing the deity and Divine authority of Jesus. The command to tell the priest of his cleansing and healing from leprosy was in obedience to the Law in Leviticus 14. Jesus came to fulfil the law, not by-pass it. The priest must have been astounded by the fact and evidence of the healing of a leper, also that Jesus touched him, producing the healing.

This leper had faith that Jesus could cure him, and true faith is never disappointed.

Leprosy is also an appropriate picture of sin because it is loathsome, destructive, infectious, and in some forms, humanly incurable.

Touching a leper would render a person ceremonially unclean too, but Jesus touched the leper and the healing came through direct contact. No leper in Israel had been healed, except Miriam and Naaman, though he was a Syrian, but healed in Israel. (Miriam's healing is in Numbers 12:10-15).

Lepers were the worst of untouchables. Physical contact made the person ceremonially unclean, that is, unfit to worship with the congregation of Israel. But when Jesus touched the leper, and spoke the healing words, the leprosy vanished immediately.

The Lord Jesus has the power to heal, cleanse from sin and to qualify the cleansed person to be a worshipper.

This is the first time in Matthew's Gospel where Jesus commanded someone not to tell anyone of this miracle of healing, or of what they had seen. This was probably because many in Israel wanted deliverance from the Romans and would want to make Him King. But He



knew that Israel was still unrepentant, that the nation would reject His **spiritual** leadership, and He must first go to the cross.

Under the Mosaic Law, the priests also served as physicians. When a leper was cleansed, he was obligated under the law to bring an offering before the priest in order to be pronounced clean (Leviticus 14:4-6). It was a very rare event for a leper to be cured. So unusual, in fact, that this priest should have been alerted that the Messiah had at last appeared.

The Gospel makes no mention of any such reaction from the priest, even though Jesus told the leper to obey the law in this matter. He was giving the priesthood the opportunity of recognising the evidence that He was the long-awaited Messiah. This account is also in Mark 1:40-45 and Luke 5:12-16. There is no record of any reaction from the priest or the priesthood at large.

The Centurion's Servant Healed – Matthew 8:5-13

5 Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, 6 saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented." 7 And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." 8 The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.

9 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." 10 When Jesus heard it, He marvelled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!

11 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." 13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

The Roman officer exercised great faith, as expressed by Jesus, surpassing any faith in Israel. The fact that he was a Gentile, considered unclean by the Jewish religious leaders, and a Roman at that, rebuked Israel for the sins of the nation. The centurion's servant could have been a boy slave (Greek: Pais).

In verses 10-12, Jesus marveled at the faith of this Gentile. This is one of only two occasions when Jesus is said to have marveled. The other time was at the unbelief of the Jews (Mark 6:6). This led Jesus to point out that Gentiles would come from all over the world to His coming kingdom, to enjoy fellowship with the Jewish Patriarchs.

On the other hand, the original sons of the kingdom would be thrown into the outer darkness, where they would weep and gnash their teeth. Weeping is a sign of the remorse and grief they would feel, and gnashing of teeth is a sign of anger that this would be their fate, who thought themselves sons of the kingdom by birthright.



Jesus gave a strong comment concerning eligibility for entrance into the future Kingdom, namely, humble, believing, obedient faith in the King of the Kingdom. The children of the Kingdom (Israel) would be cast out unless they passed the criteria for entrance into the Kingdom, as demonstrated by the centurion.

Gentiles would be admitted instead. Jesus healed the servant from a distance. He was healed at precisely the time Jesus commanded it. Faith like this made entrance into the Kingdom available, regardless of national, racial or geographical residence.

Those Jews by birth who claimed knowledge of God as King, were never truly converted and had little faith. ***The same principle applies today:***

Many children born and raised in Christian families will perish in hell because they reject Christ, while others without such a privileged heritage will see heaven because they believe the gospel message.

Healing of Peter's Mother in Law – Matthew 8:14-15

Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother lying sick with a fever. 15 So He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them.

In the normal way of things, when a fever abates, the person is greatly weakened. This cure was so instantaneous and complete that she was able to get up and serve Him immediately.

This is a fitting expression of gratitude for what Jesus had done for her. We should imitate this behaviour, whenever we are healed, or blessed, by serving Him with renewed dedication and energy.

It is worth stressing the point that Jesus healed the outcast leper, also a despised Gentile Roman centurion and then this woman. Jesus had blessed the outcast, the despised, the unimportant and the excluded of society.

Many Healed After Sabbath Sunset – Matthew 8:16-17.

16 When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, 17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:
"He Himself took our infirmities
And bore our sicknesses."

Matthew closed this group of headings with an evening of miracles, dealing with disease and deliverance from demons (Mark 1:32-34; Luke 4:40-41), fulfilling Isaiah 53:4-5, as discussed above. Matthew continues to emphasize that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies, concerning miraculous works. ***These are credentials of the Messiah.***

Verse 17 is often used by faith healers to show that healing is in the atonement, therefore physical healing can be claimed by the believer through faith. Here, however, the Holy Spirit applies the prophecy of Isaiah 53:4-5 to the Messiah's earthly healing ministry, and not to His work on the cross. Isaiah 53:4-6 is the complete prophecy about spiritual, not physical,



healing, and not to be taken out of context.

Conclusion of Matthew 8:1-17

The Synoptic Gospels are replete with references to the deity of Christ, in terms of the word God being applied to Him, the word Lord being applied to Him, and evidence that Jesus possessed divine attributes. Sometimes the word Lord is simply a polite address to a superior, but it is also used in the Septuagint as a translation of the Hebrew YHWH, the covenant name of God.

The Greek word 'Kyrios' translated as 'Lord' in English, is used to translate the name of the LORD (YHWH) 6,814 times in the Septuagint Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures. ***In the New Testament, there are 717 occurrences of 'Kyrios' in all its forms.***

Therefore, any Greek speaking reader at the time of the New Testament who had any knowledge at all of the Greek Old Testament would have recognized that the word Kyrios was the name of the one who was the creator and sustainer of heaven and earth, the omnipotent God, YHWH. Therefore remember who is the 'Lord' when reading the New Testament.

End of Lecture 11 of Matthew Chapters 1-9

Lecture 12

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
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6. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

Costly Demands for Discipleship – Matthew 8:18-22

18 And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side. 19 Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go." 20 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

21 Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." 22 But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

The scribe made a strong, but perhaps rash statement about following Jesus. Could he identify with Jesus who had no personal home and security?

Another man wanted to follow Jesus, but put his family first until he had no ties to keep him at home. Jesus must have priority over all other claims on our lives. ***The term 'Son of Man' is used twenty-nine times in Matthew's Gospel with reference to the Messiahship of Jesus.***



We have seen Christ exercising His authority over His Creation, over disease and demons. But when He comes to human beings He meets with reluctance and resistance. This is a strong affirmation of our God-given free will. Jesus explained the cost of discipleship, but He did not force obedience. That is up to the individual, both of whom in this passage went back to their earthly concerns.

The first example in our passage gives us a rather self-confident scribe, who promised to follow Jesus all the way, wherever He went. Jesus' answer forced him to count the cost, which would be a life of self-denial. Jesus said, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

During Jesus public ministry He had no home of His own. On the other hand, there were homes where He was a welcome guest and He would have a place to sleep. The true intent of His words seem to be spiritual. This world could not provide Him with true rest. He had work to do and could not rest until it was completely accomplished.

The same is true of His followers: this world is not their (our) resting place. At least, it shouldn't be! It was this prospect that quenched the scribe's ardour. The second example in our passage is another potential follower, full of good intentions, but who had a higher priority: the family business of burying his father.

The fundamental issue is contained in the words "me first." The man put his own concerns ahead of Christ. Although it is perfectly right to provide a proper burial for a family member, it becomes wrong when even such a worthy responsibility is placed before the call of Christ. Jesus responded, "***Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.***"

In effect, Jesus was telling him that his first priority was to follow Him. Now the physically dead cannot bury their own dead. Jesus was again speaking with spiritual intent. He meant let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead. An unsaved person can do all that. But there is a work which only the saved of Christ can do. Give the best efforts of your life to what only you can do.

We are not told explicitly how these two men responded, but the implication is that they left Christ to make a comfortable life in this world, without the burden of true discipleship, and wasting their lives on temporal works which have no lasting value. Before we criticize them, we should test ourselves on the two aspects of discipleship that Jesus taught in this passage.

Jesus Stills the Storm – Matthew 8:23-27

23 Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. 24 And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. 25 Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!"

26 But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. 27 So the men marvelled,* saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"



- * Mark 4:41 – Feared exceedingly
- * Luke 8:25 – And they were afraid, and marvelled...

The Sea of Galilee is noted for sudden, tremendously violent storms. Winds are funnelled down from the Jordan valley to the north, picking up speed in the narrow valley, creating very dangerous condition on the sea. When the storm broke, Jesus was asleep. His disciples were veteran fishermen. They knew the Sea of Galilee, but this storm was truly great, and they were terrified.

The storm made them afraid, but when they saw Jesus' command over the elements, and the instant calm following His commands, they feared exceedingly. They were even more afraid. They were afraid of Him and who He was. He was 'sui generis', one of a kind, the Messiah, the God-Man. This was just one more example of His credentials as Messiah

Jesus demonstrated His power over His own creation. Jesus rebuked the wind, but first rebuked the fearful lack of faith in His disciples. How could they perish when Jesus was in the boat? The death of the cross awaited Jesus. He was not to perish in the Sea of Galilee. The disciples were amazed and full of awe at Jesus' demonstration of controlling power. The change was sudden and immediate at His command with power over creation.

There is a lesson for us all here. All disciples run into storms throughout their lives. Sometimes the storms are so great we think we are going to be overwhelmed. For disciples, it is a comfort to know that, figuratively speaking, Jesus is in our life's boat. In reality, the Spirit of Christ is with us, and no matter the outcome of a particular storm, will always be with faithful disciples.

The Healing of Two Demon Possessed Men – Matthew 8:28-34

28 When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. 29 And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

30 Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. 31 So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine." 32 And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.

33 Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. 34 And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region.

From the dangers of a turbulent storm which Jesus caused to cease so abruptly, Jesus met two men considered uncontrollable, being so fierce. Like the storm, they had a storm inside them which only Jesus could deal with. The demons in the men recognized Jesus as the Son of God (v29). Had Jesus come to torment them 'before the time'?



The demons knew who Jesus was, and that He would finally destroy them. In this respect their theology was more accurate than that of many modern liberal theologians. Sensing that Jesus was going to cast them out, they asked to be transferred to a nearby herd of pigs. ***The question is, why?***

Strangely, Jesus granted their request. ***Again, Why?*** To understand, there are two facts to keep in mind:

1. Demons hate the disembodied state; they want to indwell human beings, or, if that is not possible, animals.
2. Without exception the purpose of demons is to destroy.

If Jesus had only cast them out, they would have sought other people in the area to inhabit. By allowing them to go into the pigs He prevented harm to other men and women. Jesus confined their destructive intentions to animals, since it was not yet time for the final judgment of all demons by the Lord of Creation.

As soon as the transfer took place the pigs ran off into the sea and drowned. This demonstrates their permanent aim is to destroy, but Jesus prevented them from doing any more damage. I believe these particular demons were completely destroyed by Jesus (sent to the abyss) when the pigs drowned. Otherwise they would again be free to torment others in the region, negating the original purpose of healing the two men.

This incident is described in both Mark 5:1-20 and Luke 8:26-39. In both these accounts there is much more detail, but both only refer to one demon possessed man. In Mark's account we read that there were 2,000 pigs, which underlines the possibility that an individual can be possessed by the number of demons it takes to destroy 2,000 pigs.

In Luke's account we read:

Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. 31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

Although not in the text, I believe Jesus did just that.

The herdsmen ran back to the town and the citizens of the town were angry and upset, and they asked Jesus to leave. This was no doubt because Jesus had just destroyed a valuable herd of pigs. They chose material wealth rather than rejoicing that those two men had been healed. This is yet another example of people rejecting the call of Christ for material gain.

The appointed time would be when Jesus judges the fallen angels and also casts Satan into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10). Rather than remaining disembodied, the demons requested entry into a herd of pigs owned by Gentiles on this east side of Galilee, Gadara or area of the Gergesenes.

The aftermath of the miracles of Jesus healing the demon-possessed men, was that Jesus was urged to leave that area by the owners of the pigs. No doubt they were fearful of what had happened and did not want direct confrontation with the demands of Jesus. They preferred swine to the Saviour and money instead of the Messiah.



Authority of the King to Forgive Sin – Matthew 9:1-8

9 So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. 2 Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.” 3 And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, “This Man blasphemes!”

4 But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? 5 For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’? 6 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins” — then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” 7 And he arose and departed to his house.

8 Now when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled* and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

* NU Text reads “were afraid.” (ἐφοβήθησαν, ephobēthēsan)

5828 φοβέομαι (*phobeomai*): vb.; ≡ DBLHebr 3707; Str 5399; TDNT 9.189—1. LN 25.252 **be afraid, state of fear, be alarmed** (Mt 10:28; 17:6; Ac 5:26); 2. LN 87.14 **respect, show reverence for** (Lk 18:2); 3. LN 53.58 **worship, profound reverence** (Lk 1:50; Ac 13:16)

Rejected by the Gergesenes (Gerasenes) Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee and returned to Capernaum, His new home town since the people of Nazareth had attempted to kill Him (Luke 4:29-31). It was here that Jesus performed some of His greatest and most significant miracles. The first one, we are told, is the power to forgive sins with the healing of the paralytic.

In verse 1, four men came to Him bearing a paralytic on a makeshift bed, or mat. Mark’s Gospel tells us that the crowd was so great that they had to tear open the roof to lower the man into the presence of Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith He said to the paralytic, “Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.” Notice how Jesus saw **their** faith.

It was faith that prompted the men to bring their invalid friend to Jesus, and it was the invalid’s faith that went out to Jesus for healing. Jesus first rewarded this faith by forgiving the man his sins. The Great Physician dealt with the greatest infirmity first, his sins, before treating the physical paralysis. **He gave the greatest blessing first.**

In verses 3-5 we see the irate reaction of the religious professionals to Jesus’ forgiving sin. They muttered between themselves and accused Him of blasphemy. They were never going to accept Him as the Messiah, never mind God, who alone could forgive sin. In His omniscience, the Lord knew their thoughts and rebuked them for their evil hearts and unbelief.

Jesus asked the scribes which was the easiest thing to say, either “your sins are forgiven,” or “arise and walk.” It is just as easy to **say** either, but which is easier to **do**? Both are humanly impossible, but the results of the forgiveness of sins are not visible, but the second is, quite frankly, not only visible, but impossible to ignore.



In verses 6-7, so that the scribes could know that He had the power to forgive sin, and that He should be honoured and acclaimed as God, Jesus gave them a miracle they could see, not that it would make any difference in their attitudes, but they could not refute the visible miracle. Turning to the paralyzed man, He said, “Arise, take up your bed and go to your house.”

In verse 8, when the crowds saw the man walking home with his bed (or pallet), they had two emotions, fear and wonder. They were afraid in the presence of the clearly supernatural event. On the other hand they glorified God for giving such power to men. In doing so, they completely missed the significance of the miracle.

The **visible** healing of the paralytic was intended to confirm the **invisible** miracle that the man’s sins had been forgiven.

They should have realized, especially the scribes, that what they had seen was not an occasion of God giving power to men, but of God’s presence among them in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. We know from later events that the scribes became more fixed in their unbelief and hatred of the real and present Messiah.

Paralyzed Man Healed and Forgiven. Healing this man gave visible demonstration of the power of Jesus. The forgiveness of sin provided no visible evidence of Jesus claim to forgive sin. There was no visible result. The command of Jesus, saying, ‘arise and walk’, was linked with the forgiveness of sin. Sin cripples lives.

The visible power of Jesus proved the invisible forgiveness of sin. The healing of the man’s paralysis was used by Jesus as an analogy for His ability to forgive sin. Jesus responded to the faith of those who brought the paralyzed man to Him.

End of Lecture 12 of Matthew Chapters 1-9

Lecture 13

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
3. The Ministry of Christ
4. The Requirements of Holy Living
5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah
6. **The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People**

This lecture begins with the calling of Matthew himself, the author of this gospel, and is concerned with the nature and purpose of Jesus healing people. The tension and building animosity towards Jesus, are temporarily relieved by Matthew’s simple and humble account of his own calling. However, there is more to it than that. It is an outline of Jesus’ purposes and ministry.

The Call of Matthew – Matthew 9:9-13



9 As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he arose and followed Him.

10 Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. 11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

12 When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13 But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

This simple story illustrates the nature and purpose of Jesus healing people—the Shepherd of Israel, who redeems and saves the lost.

He is also called Levi (Mark 2 & Luke 5). He was hated by the Jewish people because he served the Romans as a collector of taxes. He was wealthy, because tax collectors kept some of the taxes which were usually overcharged. He left all this to follow Christ in obedience to His call, and showed his intent by inviting many tax collectors and sinners of varying descriptions to his home for a hospitality meal. Jesus was present with His disciples.

As Jesus passed the tax office, He said to Matthew, “Follow Me.” There was an *immediate* response from Matthew, who got up and followed Jesus. Matthew left behind a notoriously dishonest occupation and became a disciple of Jesus. As someone said, “He lost a comfortable life but he found a destiny. He forsook a good income to find honour. He left security for an adventure impossible to imagine beforehand.”

Not the least of the consequences of his decision to follow Jesus, were that he became one of the twelve, and the author of one of the four Gospels. In verse 10 the meal organised by Matthew for his fellow tax-collectors was his way of declaring his new faith among his former colleagues, and others generally considered to be sinners and unclean, wanting them also to meet Jesus.

A Pharisee criticized the situation, questioning the disciples concerning Jesus, “why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” Jesus replied that sinners have come to repentance. God loves to impart mercy, Hosea 6:6, used again later in the Gospel. Jesus said that those who think they are without the sickness of sin in their lives think they have no need of the Great Physician to heal and forgive.

On the other hand, those who know the sickness of sin in their lives come to Jesus to be made whole. Jesus did not come to call the self-righteous person, they would not respond, not knowing their need of Him. The Pharisee was instructed to go and learn the truth of Hosea 6:6, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice.”

Generally, the Pharisees considered themselves spiritually healthy and on the side of the angels. They were unwilling to acknowledge their need for Jesus and His forgiveness. Actually they were terminally ill spiritually, and desperately needed the Great Physician. The tax-collectors and sinners, on the other hand, were more open to consider their true situation, and their need of Christ’s saving grace.



In fact, the charge of the Pharisees was true, Jesus was eating with sinners—and meeting them where they were spiritually.

If Jesus had eaten with Pharisees, the charge would still have been true—probably more so!

If Jesus had not eaten with sinners in this world of ours, He would always have eaten alone!

It is very important to realize that when Jesus ate with sinners, He never participated in their sinful ways nor compromised His ministry. He used such occasions to call men to the truth and holiness of God. The trouble with the Pharisees was that, although they followed the rituals of Judaism, their hearts were cold, hard and without mercy. ***That is why Jesus challenged them to reconsider Hosea 6:6, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice.”***

We must remember that God instituted the sacrificial system, but He did not want the rituals to become a substitute for inward righteousness. He is not pleased with rituals divorced from personal godliness—the very thing the Pharisees had done to themselves. They observed the letter of the law, but had no compassion for those who needed spiritual help. They associated only with self-righteous people like themselves.

In stark contrast, in verse 12, Jesus made the point that they had long forgotten: He came to call the sinners, not the righteous to repentance. Jesus perfectly fulfilled God’s desire for mercy as well as sacrifice. In one sense, there are no righteous people in the world, so He came to call everyone to repentance. Here, the thought is that His call is only effective for those who recognize that they are sinners and need His help.

The call of the Christ is ineffectual to those who are proud, self-righteous and unrepentant. He is not able to bring healing to such people, with their hard hearts. It is important to bear in mind that physical healing is a visible analogy for invisible spiritual healing, where sins are forgiven and the breach between God and mankind is healed. This is the nature and purpose of Jesus’ healing.

Jesus is Questioned about Fasting— Matthew 9:14-17

14 Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?” 15 And Jesus said to them, “Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

16 No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. 17 Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”

In verses 14-15 John’s disciples came and questioned why Jesus’ disciples did not fast like they did, and also the Pharisees. Jesus replied that it is not fitting to mourn during the time when the Bridegroom is with them, as at a wedding. Jesus prophesied that the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away (to death, resurrection and ascension). Then they would fast and mourn, they being sad at His absence.



The legal and hypocritical attitudes of the Pharisees could not be applied to the coming new Dispensation - which Jesus planned to introduce. It would be like adding new cloth to old worn out garments and putting new wine into worn out expanded wineskins. The new cannot fit into the old. All garments must become new, or the new will tear away from the old.

This question by John's disciples gave Jesus the opportunity to point out that John marked the end of one dispensation, whereas Jesus was introducing a new age of grace. He showed that their respective principles cannot be mixed. He used two analogies to demonstrate this, patching an old garment with new cloth, and putting new wine into old wineskins. The consequences would be worse than ever.

Formal man-made legalized religious hypocrisy is incompatible with the fresh new wine of new life in the Church by the Spirit of God, or life in the future Kingdom. The new wine of grace could not be poured into skin-bottles of the legality of religion, apostatized Judaism, bound up by man-made laws, over six hundred, far in excess of the Ten Commandments.

Gaebelein had something to say about patching old cloth with new:

"A Judaistic Christianity which, with a profession of faith and the Gospel, attempts to keep the law and fosters legal righteousness is a greater abomination in the eyes of God than professing Israel in the past, worshipping idols."²

Concerning the analogy of new wine in old wineskins, the life and liberty of the Gospel ruins the wineskins of ritual. The joy which Christ brought could not be expressed in terms of the forms and rituals of the Old Testament. There must be an entirely new order of things. Pettingill makes this very clear:

"Thus does the King warn His disciples against the admixture of the old religion of law-works and the new Gospel of salvation by grace alone. And yet this is what has been done throughout Christendom. Judaism has been patched up and adapted everywhere among the churches and the old garment is called "Christianity." The result is a confusing mixture, which is neither Judaism nor Christianity, but a ritualistic substitution of dead works for a trust in the living God.

"The new wine of free salvation has been poured into the old wineskins of legalism, and with what result? Why, the skins are burst and ruined and the wine is spilled and the precious life-giving draught is lost. The law has lost its terror, because it is mixed with grace, and grace has lost its beauty and character as grace, for it is mixed with law-works."³

The new cannot be contained in the worn out unfitting wineskins, already expanded and cannot stretch to incorporate and accommodate new wine—the new ways of the Church and new life of the Kingdom. The old cannot adapt to the new. The old must be discarded like a worn out cloth and an over-stretched wineskin.

² A.C. Gaebelein, *Matthew*, (BiblioLife, 29 Sept. 2009. First published 1910) p. 193.

³ W.L. Pettingill, *Simple Studies in Matthew*, (1910) pp. 111-112.
https://www.academia.edu/6992448/Simple_Studies_in_Matthew_W_L_Pettingill



A Woman Healed and a Daughter Raised Back to Life – Matthew 9:18-26

18 While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live.” 19 So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples. 20 And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment.

21 For she said to herself, “If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well.” 22 But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, “Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And the woman was made well from that hour.

23 When Jesus came into the ruler’s house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, 24 He said to them, “Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping.” And they ridiculed Him. 25 But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. 26 And the report of this went out into all that land.

In verses 18-19, Jesus’ discourse on the change of dispensations was interrupted by a ruler of the synagogue whose daughter had just died, who worshipped Jesus before explaining his distress. He must have loved his daughter very much to go against the hatred of Jesus by the religious establishment. This demonstrates his faith in Jesus as the healing Messiah.

Jesus honoured his faith by starting out towards the ruler’s home, together with His disciples. Then there was a second interruption, described in verse 20. This time it was a woman who had suffered from a hemorrhage for 12 years. Jesus was never annoyed by such interruptions. He was always approachable and accessible.

In verses 21-22, we are told that the medical science of the day was unable to find a cure. In fact, her condition was deteriorating (Mark 5:26). She saw Jesus surrounded by a crowd. In faith she worked her way through the crowd and touched the edge of His garment. True faith never goes unnoticed by Him.

The woman’s faith, even to touch Jesus’ clothing brought her healing. Mark 5:30 adds what Jesus said, “Who touched me?” knowing that the power and virtue to heal had gone out from Him, without Jesus even consciously engaging the woman in conversation before healing—an unusual event. Jesus spoke comforting words, reassuring her, concerning her healing from Him.

Jesus continued to Jairus’ house, who was ruler of the synagogue, probably next door to the synagogue: and near Peter’s mother-in-law’s house. (The ruins of these buildings are to be seen today in Capernaum). When Jesus arrived, the professional mourners were wailing with what someone has labelled synthetic grief.

Jesus said his daughter was ‘sleeping’ (Greek: *Katheudo*, meaning though she was dead, He would raise her up to life, like waking her up from sleep). It is worth noting that Jesus put those who mocked out of the house. They would not be favoured by the Grace of Jesus. The news of this incident spread rapidly.

All the people mocked Jesus for saying she wasn’t dead, merely sleeping. Most commentators



believe that Jesus was using ‘sleep’ as a euphemism for death. Others believe that the girl was in a coma. This does not deny that Jesus could have raised her had she been dead. On this view, He was merely being honest.

In any case the Lord took the girl by the hand and the miracle occurred and she got up immediately. It did not take long for the news of this miracle to spread throughout the land. The miracle of the woman cured of her hemorrhage should not be forgotten, as her complete faith in Jesus healed her, without even talking to Jesus.

The Healing of Two Blind Men – Matthew 9:27-31

27 When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, “Son of David, have mercy on us!” 28 And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.”

29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith let it be to you.” 30 And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, “See that no one knows it.” 31 But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country.

As Jesus departed from the ruler’s neighbourhood, two blind men followed Him, pleading for sight. Although blind, their spiritual discernment was clear. By calling Him “Son of David” they recognised Him as the long-awaited Messiah and rightful King of Israel. And they knew that when the Messiah came, one of His credentials would be that He would give sight to the blind (Isaiah 61:1)

So Jesus responded and gave them their sight. Note that Jesus tested the men, requiring their persistence. So they entered the house where Jesus was, as an extra step showing persistent faith. Jesus demanded secrecy, but the men could not keep quiet. Jesus did not want to be considered a ‘circus performer’ of miracles for people who just wanted healing only. That was not His purpose.

When Jesus tested their faith by asking if they believed He could give them sight, they immediately said, “Yes, Lord.” Then the Jesus touched their eyes and they became normal eyes, they could see.

Man says “Seeing is believing.”

God says, “Believing is seeing.”

The writer to the Hebrews noted, “By faith we understand...” (Hebrews 11:3)

The Apostle John wrote, “I have written to you who believe...that you may know...” (1 John 5:13)

God is not pleased with the kind of faith that demands a prior miracle. He want us to believe because He is God.

Finally, why did Jesus give them a stern warning to tell no-one about this miracle? Probably He did not want to stir up a premature move to declare Him as King. The people yet were



unrepentant. He could not reign over them until they acclaimed Him as the true Messiah and were “born again.”

Besides, He was acutely aware that a revolutionary movement in favour of Himself would bring horrific reprisals from the Roman garrison. The Lord Jesus had to go to the cross before He could reign as King. Anything that blocked the path to Calvary was against the will of God and His plan of salvation for all.

In their misguided gratitude, the two men spread the news of the miraculous restoration of their eyesight. We might be tempted to sympathise with them and their open testimony of Jesus. The fact is they were completely disobedient to the Lord, and probably did more harm than good by stirring up shallow curiosity, rather than Spirit-led interest. Even gratitude is not an excuse for disobedience.

Another Demon-Possessed Man Delivered – Matthew 9:32-34

32 As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. 33 And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marvelled, saying, “It was never seen like this in Israel!”
34 But the Pharisees said, “He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.”

First Jesus gave life to the dead, then sight to the blind, and now speech to the dumb. There seems to be a spiritual trajectory here: life first, then understanding, then testimony. An evil spirit had struck this man dumb. Someone was concerned enough to bring him to Jesus. God bless those who have been instrumental in bringing others to Jesus.

Immediately the demon was cast out, the previously mute man spoke out. The common people acknowledged that Israel was witnessing unprecedented miracles. But the Pharisees responded by claiming that Jesus cast out demons by the power of the ruler of the demons. This is what Jesus later called the unpardonable sin (12:32).

To attribute the miracles which He performed by the Holy Spirit to the power of Satan was blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. We must not forget that the Holy Spirit is God. While others were being blessed by the healing touch of Christ, the Pharisees remained spiritually dead. They were blind to the implications of His healing ministry.

Jesus’ Compassion upon the Crowds – Matthew 9:35-38

35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. 36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few. 38 Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest.”

These final few verses of chapter 9 begin what is known as the Third Galilean Circuit. Jesus travelled the towns and villages preaching the good news of the kingdom.

Jesus teaches and preaches the Gospel of the Kingdom, healing much sickness and disease,



again demonstrating His credentials as the King-Messiah. The crowds only wanted physical healing, not wanting their spiritual needs met—no repentance or turning from their ways to follow Jesus is recorded here.

The good news of the kingdom meant that He was the King of Israel, and that if the nation repented and acknowledged Him, He would reign over them. A real and true offer was made to Israel at this time. In chapter 11 the hardness of rejection sets in and chapter 12 produces Jesus' condemnation of that generation, especially the religious leaders who led the people against Jesus.

What would have happened if Israel had responded? The Bible doesn't say, but we do know that Christ would still have had to go to the cross so that God could justify sinners. Just as the miracles of the First Advent gave the credentials of the Servant-King, so miracles will mark His Second Advent in power and great glory – “the power of the age to come” (Hebrews 6:5).

As Christ taught and preached, He healed all kinds of sicknesses, demonstrating His credentials as the King-Messiah. As Jesus looked on Israel's multitudes, and seeing they were weary and helpless, without a leader, as the sheep are without a shepherd, He was moved by great compassion.

A great work of spiritual harvesting needed to be done, but the labourers were few. The same problem has persisted to this day: it seems the need is always greater than the available workforce. Jesus told the disciples to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send the labourers.

Notice here that the need does not constitute a call. Labourers must not go until sent.

Jesus did not identify the Lord of the harvest. Some think He is the Holy Spirit. Jesus Himself sent out the disciples, so it seems clear that He Himself is the One to whom we should pray in the matter of world evangelization. In all these things we see the nature and purpose of Jesus' healing ministry, not just to authenticate Himself as the Messiah, but to bring many people to salvation and glory.

End of Lecture 13 of Matthew Chapters 1-9

This concludes the commentary to the end of Chapter 9. Bibliography will follow at the end of the commentary complete.

Summary

1. The Genealogy of Jesus
2. The Supernatural Incarnation
3. The Ministry of Christ
4. The Requirements of Holy Living
5. The Authentication of Jesus as Messiah
6. The Nature and Purpose of Jesus Healing People

Endnote:



For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

Romans 15:4

End of Section 1

The Gospel According to Matthew, is being delivered in three sections:

- 1. Chapters 1-9**
- 2. Chapters 10-13**
- 3. Chapters 14-28**

We have completed Section 1, Chapters 1-9, and look forward to Section 2, Chapters 10-13.