

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW; YOUR KINGDOM COME...ON EARTH

Week 1 – Sitting at Jesus’ Feet

January 25, 2022

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Click on Lessons. Scroll down to SBC Women’s Bible Study – The Gospel of Matthew.

We are in the gospel of Matthew...so, let’s turn to Luke 2:41-47 - *His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. ⁴² And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. ⁴³ When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; ⁴⁴ but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day’s journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. ⁴⁵ So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. ⁴⁶ Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.*

What are your observations re: this passage?

What are your questions?

Luke 2:47 - *And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers...*

How do you read the Bible? How do you study the Bible? As you read the text, the words of God, do you make observations as to what God is saying? Do you then ask questions? We need to make observations and ask questions. The Bible is the word of God. God has spoken and those who are followers of Jesus are responsible for knowing what God has said!

Don’t we each SO DESIRE to be so caught up...in what Jesus is saying and...in WHO HE IS? Aren’t we longing to know Him more intimately so that we can glorify Him and mature in our faith?

The disciples of Rabbis in first century Israel would follow their rabbi as he walked throughout Israel – as he taught. The culture of the day describes learning from a rabbi/a teacher as “sitting at his feet.”

Luke 10:39 - Martha of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus...Martha...*had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word.*

The Apostle Paul spoke of the Rabbi who had taught him...

Acts 22:3 - *I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel (Rabbi Gamaliel was a well-known Rabbi in Paul’s day), taught according to the strictness of our fathers’ law....*

When you read Scripture, do you feel like you're sitting at Jesus' feet and learning from HIM?

In the culture of the day, sitting at the rabbi's feet occurred in synagogues...but it was also carried out under the fig tree because of the shade it provided and because the fruit

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of the tree was sweet. "Under the fig tree" became an idiom for one who sits under the Rabbi's instruction. Understanding Jewish history and Jewish culture is helpful in comprehending the background for many Bible accounts. And, sources on Jewish history and Jewish culture also help us grasp why Jesus said what He said (i.e. the Sermon on the Mount; Olivet Discourse) and why Jesus did what He did (i.e. re: calling His disciples).

The book of Matthew follows a theme. And, so, the story of God's promise of the Messiah, the Redeemer, the coming King continues. In Matthew's gospel, Jesus clearly presented Himself as the prophesied King, the Son of David.

In Jesus' genealogy in Matt. 1:1, He is called the Son of David which is a Messianic title for the One Who would come, promised by God, and this One is from the lineage of King David.

The Son of David, the Messiah, according to the Hebrew Scriptures has the right to reign on earth (Psa. 2:7; II Sam. 7:8-13 [God's promise to King David was that he would have a Son Who would rule from his throne forever!])

Isa. 9:6 – Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder. And His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

We're going to read in the book of Matthew that when the people called Jesus the "Son of David" – they were believing that this was the One Who had been promised – the Messiah – the One Who would reign on earth. The book of Matthew proclaims...here is the Messiah...the King! When will Jesus rule and reign occur? Has this already occurred?

Isa. 2:2 - Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. This will occur in the future.

Matt. 25:31 - When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

At this time – today/now - Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God as our great High Priest. (Heb. 4:14-16-Heb. 5:1-11).

Heb. 1:1-3 - God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; ³ who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high

CONSIDER: Luke 19:11-12 – On His way to Jerusalem, at Jesus’ triumphal entry, many were accompanying Him along the way. *Now as they heard these things* (what Jesus was teaching), *He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.* ¹² *Therefore He said: ‘A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.’* Jesus told the masses who followed Him that He would be given a kingdom following His departure to heaven. And then He would return. The kingdom of God was not given to

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the Jewish people during Jesus’ public ministry at His first coming. WHY? Ponder why the kingdom wasn’t given to Israel during Jesus first coming!

Matthew deals primarily with the life of Jesus the Messiah fulfilling OT prophecies relating to the coming King. Jesus’ genealogy in Matthew 1 PROCLAIMS Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of David (the KING), the Son of Abraham (a member of the “tribe” – Jewish).

The book of Matthew does not record the shepherds’ visit to the infant Jesus in Bethlehem Ephrathah – to find the spotless Lamb of God. Matthew 2 however, records that the Magi, who were Gentiles, came to worship the “King of the Jews” in Jerusalem. Why did they travel to Jerusalem? And, why would Gentiles look for the “King of the Jews”? (Check out Week 10’s handout from the fall semester, 2021)

In Matthew 3 we are introduced to John the Immerser, John the Baptizer. John preached that the kingdom of heaven/the kingdom of God (same kingdom) was “at hand” because the King was near. “Then Jesus came” to the Jordan to be baptized by John. God the Father proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God at Jesus’ baptism.’

In Matthew 4, *Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted/tested by the devil* whom Jesus drove away declaring, *Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’* God the Father declared Jesus to be the Son of God; at Jesus’ “temptation/testing,” He proved that He is the Son of God!

Between Matt. 4:11 and Matt. 4:12 there is a one-year gap. The gap is filled in through the events recorded in John 1:19 to John 4:45. Last semester we read of Jesus calling several disciples and traveling to Galilee to perform His first miracle at a wedding in Cana (John 2), where He turned water into wine which was significant! If you weren’t with us last semester, you might wish to check out seeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

- Here was a miracle of creation – Jesus made wine out of water. Only God creates. Jesus is God! What a proclamation!
- After Jesus’ baptism, after He announced Himself to Israel, Jesus performed His first miracle at a Wedding. We know Jesus as our Bridegroom (Jn. 3:29; Lk. 5:35; Matt. 9:14-15; Matt. 25:1-10; Rev. 19:7. OT bridegroom verses: Jer. 7:34; Jer. 16:9; Jer.

25:10; Jer. 33:11) By this miracle, Jesus sanctified marriage which speaks to the union between God and Israel (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:14; Jer. 31:32; Eze. 16:8, 32). Jesus blessed the marriage celebration.

- The marriage relationship speaks to true joy in the Scriptures.
- Jesus began His public ministry at a wedding offering joy as the voice of the Bridegroom.

During His Galilean ministry, we read in...

Matt. 4:17 – that *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’* Same message as John the Immerser.

Matt. 4:23-25 - *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom...* Jesus was a teacher during His public ministry.

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Jesus spoke the Word of God. He is the WORD. And, His miracles authenticated Who He is. (Check out Week 6 – 10/19/21 – entitled Messianic Miracles.)

...and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. ²⁴ Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them. ²⁵ Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

What have we thought when we’ve read this passage? “Of course, He healed people, He’s God...He’s compassionate.” Have we ever focused on the ramifications of Jesus taking on human flesh? He grew weary. He hungered. He thirsted. He was crucified. He felt the nails. He died!! In His flesh Jesus experienced physical limitations! Jesus became a bondservant for us (Phil. 2:7). We need to express our thanksgiving for the overwhelming love of Jesus!

What resonated in the minds of the people in Jesus’ day? “Who is this Who is healing all who are sick and tormented, including those who were demon-possessed?” Many might have remembered the scroll of Isaiah that reads the Messiah, when He will come - Isa. 35:5-6 - *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.* WHEN will this occur? During the Millennial Kingdom!

Perhaps they remembered that the prophet Zechariah wrote of NO unclean spirits in the Kingdom of God (Zech. 13:2)!

YES - He is here! The MESSIAH Who will bring the Kingdom is here! And, many were merely looking for the “handout” of a healing!

Matt. 5:1-7 - *And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. ² Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: ³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, (spiritually bankrupt; we are as bad off as we can be regarding salvation! When we realize that it is GOD’s grace alone that saves through*

faith in the Messiah Jesus, we are BLESSED!) *blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Jesus shared God's heart...God's plan of salvation!

The Greek word translated "blessed" means "happy, blissful" or, literally, "to be enlarged." Psa. 118:5 - *I called on the LORD in distress; the LORD answered me and set me in a broad place.* In the Hebrew "broad place" means large, spacious, roomy, expansive. Root meaning: to expand with JOY! In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus used the word *blessed* to refer to a deep joy of the soul which is speaking of salvation.

Jesus taught the intent of the law – what God had intended. The Jewish religious leadership taught the letter of the law and added their interpretation (each Rabbi had their own interpretation)...of how the law should be lived out. Jesus corrected the misinterpretations of the law that were current in His day. The religious leadership focused on external obedience; Jesus focused on the heart; He taught the spirit of the Law. The Rabbis taught that it was wrong to murder; Jesus taught that it was wrong to hate. The Rabbis taught that it was wrong to commit the act of adultery; Jesus taught that it was wrong to lust (5:27-30).

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Judaism had turned the Old Testament law into a system of works. Jesus taught that no one could be saved by living up to the requirements of the law, even the scribes and Pharisees, the most devoutly religious Jews. A system of works was never God's intent. Hab. 2:4 – *The just shall live by faith!*

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus announced to the multitude and to His disciples... Matt. 5:20 - *For I say to you, that unless your righteousness (the righteousness that is by faith from God) exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees (their "righteousness" was self-righteousness), you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.*

The heart change/the trust in God aspect was not so much focused upon by the Jewish religious leadership. The Jewish leadership didn't depend on God but on their Jewish lineage to get them into heaven. The Rabbis' interpretations focused on how to live out the thousands of manmade commandments! The Jewish people were under a tremendous burden of requirements they could not meet.

Jesus' words were radical. His message was a message of transformation – of eternal life with God. Eternal life with God is NOT based on good works. It never was! Salvation which leads to eternal life with God has always been by grace through faith in God's revealed message always pointing to the Messiah, Jesus! There is one way of salvation throughout the Bible! Jesus told Nicodemus that he, Nicodemus the Pharisee/part of the Sanhedrin, must be born again to see the Kingdom of God! (John 3:3)

The big question from the Sermon on the Mount is the question of ...where is my heart? Matt. 6:21 - *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

Prov. 4:23 tells us that we must guard and watch over our heart so that our heart follows hard after the things of God and is not distracted by the things of this world. Are our hearts following HARD after God? (Psa. 63:8)

In our study we need to ask, “Where is my treasure?” “Where is my focus?” On what are my eyes focused? “Who, or what, am I serving?” “Where is my heart?” Jesus was surrounded by people who had never heard this kind of teaching that was authoritative and that, of course, cut to the heart.

Jesus laid out to the people God’s cure for anxiety (Matt. 6:25-34).

Are we living with anxiety today? Jesus lovingly told His people not to be anxious for the provision of food and drink and clothing. If God can care for the grass of the field, existing temporarily, how much more will God clothe and care for those who come to faith in Him? Jesus reminded them that God the Father knows their needs and that they should seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. Those who will enter the kingdom of heaven/God need to be transformed. They need to be covered with God’s righteousness (Isa. 61:10).

This was Jesus’ message to the multitude!

QUESTIONS:

Get to know one another at your table.

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Is the book of Matthew new to you?

What was new to you in this lesson? How did what you learned from the text impact you? What are you going to do with whatever impacted you? (NOTE: impact – the force of our text [what Scripture teaches] on our lives that will result in transformation)

What does sitting at Jesus feet mean in your life?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread Week 1’s handout with the Bible references.

Jot down your observations and ask questions about what you’re reading.

Share what God is teaching you with at least one person.

Read Week 2’s handout when you receive it.