

Dr. Dave Mathewson, New Testament Literature, Session 8, Matthew -- Kingdom Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 8, Matthew - - Kingdom, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Mathewson's lecture focuses on the Gospel of Matthew, particularly its unique portrayal of Jesus as the Messiah, Son of God, and fulfillment of the Old Testament. **The lecture explores the Sermon on the Mount within the context of Jesus's kingdom**, and whether or not it should be understood in terms of law vs. grace. **Matthew's purpose in writing is discussed, emphasizing its message to Jewish Christians** facing questions about their identity and the increasing inclusion of Gentiles in the church. **The lecture concludes with an examination of the Kingdom of God** as the dynamic reign of God, and what that meant to those hearing it, and how it is both already here, and not yet in its full completeness.

2. 14 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 8 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Daniel).



**Mathewson_NTLit_S
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3. Briefing Document: Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 8, Matthew -- Kingdom

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. Dave Mathewson's lecture on Matthew's Gospel.

Briefing Document: Matthew's Kingdom and Distinctives

Main Themes:

- **Matthew's Purpose:** Matthew's Gospel was likely written to encourage Jewish Christians to maintain their faith in Jesus Christ and to explain the increasing inclusion of Gentiles in the church. This was in response to potential criticism and questioning of their identity by non-Christian Jews.
- **Portrait of Jesus:** Matthew presents Jesus as the Messiah (Christ, Son of David), the Son of God, the fulfillment of the Old Testament (Law and entire Old Testament), the new Moses, and a wise teacher.
- **Fulfillment of the Old Testament:** Jesus is the climax and fulfillment of the Old Testament narrative, not just in terms of prophecy, but in how his life and teachings represent the ultimate goal to which the Old Testament pointed.
- **Kingdom of God (or Heaven):** A central theme, referring to God's dynamic reign and rule, not a specific location or time. The arrival of the Kingdom is understood as "already, but not yet," meaning it is partially present through Jesus's first coming, but awaits full consummation at his second coming.
- **Discipleship:** Jesus prepares and empowers a group of followers to continue his mission, redefining what it means to be the people of God. Membership in God's people shifts from adherence to the Law of Moses and Jewish ethnicity to faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Sermon on the Mount:** The Sermon on the Mount is presented as an ethic not just for the betterment of society but as a demand that Christ makes on those who have experienced the transforming power of God's kingdom.

Key Ideas and Facts:

1. **Matthew's Structure and Distinctiveness:** Matthew structures his Gospel around five main discourses or teaching blocks of Jesus. One of the distinctive features of Matthew's Gospel is that it is divided into these five teaching blocks.
2. **Sermon on the Mount and Grace:** Dr. Mathewson rejects the idea that the Sermon on the Mount is solely about law and meant only to demonstrate our failings. He argues it is meant for those who have already entered God's kingdom and experienced its transforming power.
 - "The Sermon on the Mount is far from a demand or a law that is imposed on God's people it's simply meant to show that they fall short, although it can do that... Instead, it is the ethic that Christ demands of those who have experienced the transforming power of God's kingdom."
 - "God provides the ability to live up to that demand. The kind of lifestyle that is expected of those who would belong to and who would enter God's kingdom."
 - The Beatitudes at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount indicate that those entering the kingdom recognize their spiritual bankruptcy, mourn for sin, and hunger for righteousness.
1. **The Great Commission:** The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) logically follows from Matthew's portrayal of Jesus as the Messiah for both Jews and Gentiles. It embodies the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed.
 - "If everything Matthew has said so far about Jesus, that if Jesus is indeed the Son of David, and he is indeed the Son of God, the Messiah and the Messiah, and if what Matthew has said about the Gentiles is true as well, if Jesus has come as the Messiah not just for Jews, but for Gentiles, then the Great Commission follows."
1. **Matthew's Audience and Purpose (Expanded):** Matthew aims to reassure Jewish Christians who may be facing criticism for their faith and the increasing Gentile composition of the church. He demonstrates through Jesus's actions and teachings (e.g., the Wise Men, the Great Commission) that the inclusion of Gentiles was part of God's plan all along.
 - "Matthew, I think one of the main reasons Matthew was written is, first of all, to encourage Christians, Jewish Christians to maintain their faith in Jesus Christ. But also, it's to explain why the church is becoming more and more Gentile."

- "Jesus himself indicated and made way for the inclusion of Gentiles. So, the Jewish Christians can maintain faith in Jesus Christ."
1. **Jesus as Messiah and Son of God:** Matthew portrays Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of David, fulfilling the Old Testament promises. The title "Son of God" emphasizes Jesus' unique relationship with the Father and further emphasizes that He is the Messiah.
- "Matthew portrays Jesus as the Christ or the Messiah. That is, Jesus is clearly portrayed as the Messiah, in the line of David, in fulfillment of the promises that God made to David, going all the way back to 2 Samuel 7 in the Old Testament."
1. **Jesus Fulfills the Old Testament (Beyond Prophecy):** Jesus embodies the ultimate goal and ideal to which the entire Old Testament pointed, not just direct prophecies. Even the law finds its climax and true meaning in Jesus's life and teaching.
- "Jesus came to, as the fulfillment, that is, the law, what the law was really moving to and pointing to and anticipating, now is finally reached with the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus' own person and teaching are the true goal of the Old Testament law and the entire Old Testament."
1. **Jesus as the "New Moses":** Matthew draws parallels between Jesus and Moses (e.g., going up a mountain to teach). Jesus is presented as greater than Moses.
- "Jesus, Matthew, wants to portray Jesus as one like Moses, but greater than Moses."
1. **Kingdom of God (Detailed Explanation):** The Kingdom of God refers to God's active reign and rule, not a geographical location or time period. Its roots go back to Genesis 1-2, where humanity was created to reflect and represent God's rule over creation. This rule was intended to spread over the entire earth.
 2. **Davidic Covenant and the Kingdom:** God's covenant with David, promising a perpetual king from his line, was God's means of restoring his plan that humanity would rule over all the earth. The Messiah is the means by which God would fulfill his intentions from Genesis 1-2.
- "The Davidic king, the Messiah, is the means by which God will fulfill His intention from Genesis 1 and 2 that humanity would reign over all the earth."

1. **The "Already, Not Yet" Kingdom:** The Kingdom of God is not fully realized at Jesus' first coming. It is already present in part, allowing people to experience God's reign now, but its complete consummation awaits Jesus' second coming.
 - "The kingdom is here already, in part, even though it is not yet here in its fullness."
1. **Redefining the People of God:** Jesus redefines what it means to be God's people. It is no longer based on ethnicity or adherence to the Law of Moses, but on faith in Jesus Christ. This opens the door for Gentiles to be included as equals.
 - "Belonging to the people of God and to Jesus means simply responding to Jesus...Now it's determined and defined solely in relationship to Jesus Christ."

Potential Discussion/Questions:

- How does Matthew's portrayal of Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament impact our understanding of the relationship between the two testaments?
- What are the practical implications of understanding the Kingdom of God as "already, not yet" for Christian living?
- How does Matthew's emphasis on the inclusion of Gentiles challenge traditional notions of identity and belonging?
- In what ways does the Sermon on the Mount speak to contemporary issues and challenges?

4. Study Guide: Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 8, Matthew -- Kingdom

Matthew: Kingdom and Distinctives - A Study Guide

Quiz: Short Answer Questions

1. What are the five main discourses or teaching blocks that structure Matthew's Gospel?
2. Explain how understanding the context of the Kingdom of God is crucial for interpreting the Sermon on the Mount.
3. According to Dr. Mathewson, what is the significance of Jesus beginning the Sermon on the Mount with the Beatitudes?
4. Summarize Matthew's purpose in writing the Gospel of Matthew.
5. Explain how Matthew portrays Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament.
6. What does Dr. Mathewson mean when he says that in Matthew Jesus portrays himself as the true Israel?
7. Explain Dr. Mathewson's interpretation of Jesus fulfilling the law.
8. Explain what Dr. Mathewson means by Jesus' phrase, "the kingdom of God."
9. Describe how Jesus redefines what it means to be part of God's people in Matthew's Gospel.
10. Explain the concept of "already, but not yet" in relation to the Kingdom of God in Matthew.

Quiz: Answer Key

1. Matthew divides his Gospel around five main discourses or teaching blocks of Jesus, with the Sermon on the Mount being the most well-known. These blocks highlight Jesus as a teacher and provide the content of his commands and instructions for his followers.
2. The Sermon on the Mount should be understood as instructions for those who have already experienced God's reign and rule through Jesus Christ. It presupposes that individuals have entered into God's kingdom and experienced its transforming power in their lives.

3. Jesus begins with the Beatitudes to emphasize that the ethic He is about to demand is attainable through God's provision, not human effort alone. The Beatitudes describe those who recognize their spiritual bankruptcy, mourn for sin, and hunger for righteousness, setting the stage for the transforming power of God's Kingdom.
4. Matthew wrote to encourage Jewish Christians to maintain their faith in Jesus Christ, explaining why the church was becoming more Gentile. Matthew uses the Old Testament to make the case for the inclusion of Gentiles.
5. Matthew portrays Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of David, and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and promises. He highlights Jesus as the new Moses, the true Israel, and the one in whom all the strands of the Old Testament find their climax and conclusion.
6. Matthew presents Jesus as the true Israel in order to demonstrate that following Jesus means redefining what it means to be a follower of God. Belonging to the people of God is no longer determined by obeying the law of Moses or through a Jewish identity, but solely through responding to Jesus Christ.
7. Jesus fulfills the law, not primarily by perfectly obeying it, but by being the goal to which the law pointed. Jesus' own person and teaching are the true goal of the Old Testament law and the entire Old Testament.
8. The Kingdom of God, as preached by Jesus in Matthew, refers to God's dynamic reign or rule, not a geopolitical location or a time period. It signifies God's powerful, active presence and authority in the lives of people.
9. Jesus redefines what it means to be part of God's people by shifting the focus from obedience to the law of Moses and ethnic identity to faith in Jesus Christ. Anyone who responds to Jesus, whether Jew or Gentile, can now belong to the true people of God.
10. The concept of "already, but not yet" refers to the nature of the Kingdom of God as both present and future. The Kingdom has already arrived in part through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, allowing individuals to experience God's reign. However, it has not yet come in its fullness, awaiting the second coming of Christ when God's kingdom will be completely consummated.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss how Matthew uses Old Testament themes and figures to establish Jesus' identity and purpose.
2. Analyze the significance of the Great Commission in Matthew's Gospel and its implications for the early church.
3. Explain how Matthew's portrayal of the Kingdom of God challenges traditional Jewish expectations of the Messiah.
4. Evaluate the role of discipleship in Matthew's Gospel and how it redefines the meaning of belonging to God's people.
5. Compare and contrast the concept of law versus grace in the Sermon on the Mount, as presented in the lecture.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Beatitudes:** A series of blessings proclaimed by Jesus at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, describing the characteristics of those who are blessed by God.
- **Christ/Messiah:** A title meaning "anointed one," referring to the promised king from the line of David who would deliver and rule Israel and the entire earth.
- **Disciple:** A follower or student of Jesus, called to learn from Him, obey His teachings, and participate in His mission.
- **Fulfillment:** The completion or realization of something that was promised or anticipated in the past, particularly in relation to Old Testament prophecies and expectations.
- **Great Commission:** Jesus' command to His disciples at the end of Matthew's Gospel to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to obey His commands.
- **Kingdom of God/Kingdom of Heaven:** The dynamic reign and rule of God, both present and future, in the lives of people and the world, offered by Jesus as the central theme of His ministry.
- **Law of Moses:** The body of laws and commandments given to Moses by God on Mount Sinai, recorded in the first five books of the Old Testament.
- **Sermon on the Mount:** A collection of Jesus' teachings in Matthew 5-7, containing ethical and moral instructions for those who have entered God's kingdom.
- **Son of David:** A title applied to Jesus, emphasizing His lineage and descent from King David, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies of a Davidic king.
- **Son of God:** A title applied to Jesus, indicating His unique relationship with God the Father and His divine nature.

5. FAQs on Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 8, Matthew -- Kingdom, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions About the Gospel of Matthew

1. What are some of the main themes or ideas that the Gospel of Matthew emphasizes that distinguish it from the other Gospels?

Matthew portrays Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of David, and the Son of God, emphasizing Jesus' fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies and the entire Old Testament narrative. Matthew also highlights the Kingdom of God/Kingdom of Heaven as a dominant theme and emphasizes discipleship, particularly how Jesus redefines what it means to be the people of God. Additionally, Matthew includes a strong emphasis on the inclusion of Gentiles, demonstrating that the church's increasingly Gentile composition aligns with Jesus's own teachings and intentions.

2. How does Matthew portray Jesus in his Gospel?

Matthew presents Jesus as the promised Messiah (Christ), the Son of David (fulfilling promises to David), and the Son of God (demonstrating a unique relationship with the Father and indicating His messianic role). Jesus is depicted as fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies and the broader narrative, surpassing figures like Moses, Jonah, and Solomon. He is also presented as a wise teacher, evident in the five main blocks of discourse within the Gospel.

3. What is the significance of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew, and how should it be interpreted?

The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) is the first of five main discourse blocks. It demonstrates the ethic that Christ demands of those who have experienced the transforming power of God's kingdom. It is not merely a list of demands but a blueprint for how God's people should live, assuming they recognize their own spiritual bankruptcy and hunger for righteousness that only God can provide. It is not meant to only show we fall short, but shows how those in God's kingdom should live, and that God provides the means to do so. It comes within the context of Jesus's teaching on the kingdom and assumes that God's kingdom and rule have arrived.

4. What is the "Great Commission" in Matthew, and why is it important?

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20), where Jesus commands his disciples to "go and make disciples of all nations," is the culmination of Matthew's Gospel. It emphasizes

the universal scope of Jesus's mission, extending beyond the Jewish people to include Gentiles. This follows from Jesus being not only the Son of David, but also the Son of Abraham. It fulfills the promise made to Abraham that through him all nations of the earth would be blessed, and emphasizes that Jesus' followers should perpetuate his mission.

5. Who was Matthew likely writing to, and what was the purpose of his Gospel?

Matthew most likely wrote to Jewish Christians, possibly those who still had contact with the Jewish synagogue. His purpose was to encourage them to maintain their faith in Jesus Christ and to explain why the church was becoming increasingly Gentile. Matthew wanted to address concerns that Jewish Christians might have about the inclusion of Gentiles in the church, arguing that Jesus himself anticipated and paved the way for this inclusion. It is meant to encourage discipleship and obedience to Christ.

6. What does the "Kingdom of God" or "Kingdom of Heaven" mean in the context of Matthew's Gospel?

The Kingdom of God (or Heaven) refers primarily to God's dynamic reign or rule in the lives of people. It is not a specific location or time period. It signifies God's active presence and power, fulfilling God's original intention from Genesis 1 and 2 for humanity to rule over all creation. When Jesus offers the kingdom of God, that means here is the long-awaited Messiah in the line of David that will not only rule over Israel but will bring humanity to its destiny of ruling over all the world.

7. How did Jesus's understanding of the Kingdom of God differ from the expectations of many Jews in the first century?

Many Jews expected the Kingdom of God to arrive in one decisive event, liberating them from Roman rule and establishing a new age of peace and blessing. Jesus, however, presented the Kingdom as arriving in two stages: already present in part through his ministry, death, and resurrection, but not yet fully realized until his second coming, when evil would be eradicated and the Kingdom would be fully consummated. This "already, but not yet" understanding of the Kingdom is crucial for interpreting Matthew.

8. How does Matthew's Gospel redefine what it means to be part of God's people?

Prior to Jesus, belonging to God's people was largely defined by obedience to the law of Moses and ethnic identification with the Jewish nation. Jesus, as the true Israel, redefines this, centering belonging to God's people around faith in Jesus Christ. This means that Gentiles can be included as God's people on an equal footing with Jews. This redefinition is reflected in the emphasis on discipleship and the Great Commission.