

Dr. Dave Mathewson, New Testament Theology, Session 13, People of God (NT), Part 1 Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 13, People of God (NT), Part 1 [Biblicalelearning.org](https://www.biblicalelearning.org), BeL

Dr. Mathewson's lecture explores the concept of the "People of God" within the New Testament, tracing its roots from the Old Testament. He argues that Jesus embodies the true Israel and fulfills God's promises to His people. **Jesus gathers a new community, a nucleus of followers that will be the true people of God in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophetic expectations.** This community, centered around Jesus, expands beyond ethnic boundaries to include all who have faith in Him. **Dr. Mathewson argues that various New Testament themes and metaphors, like the shepherd and sheep and the vine and branches, allude to this idea of the restoration and renewal of God's people.** The lecture also explores how the book of Acts and various passages in the Pauline epistles help to understand the inclusion of the Gentiles, the New Covenant, the concept of being the seed of Abraham, and language from the Old Testament related to election and redemption as fulfilled by the new people of God, the church.

2. 18 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 13 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the [Biblicalelearning.org](https://www.biblicalelearning.org) [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → NT Introduction → NT Theology).



**Mathewson_NTThe
ology_Session13.mp**

3. Briefing Document: Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 13, People of God (NT), Part 1

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. David Mathewson's lecture on "The People of God in the New Testament, Part 1."

Briefing Document: The People of God in the New Testament, Part 1

Main Theme: The lecture explores how the concept of the "People of God" evolves from the Old Testament, finds its initial fulfillment in Jesus Christ, and then expands in the New Testament to include a new covenant community based on faith in Jesus, rather than solely on ethnicity.

Key Ideas and Facts:

1. Jesus as the True Israel:

- The lecture begins by establishing Jesus as the fulfillment of Israel's story and God's intention for his people. Jesus recapitulates the story of Israel in his own life, passing the tests that Adam, Eve, and Israel failed.
- *"So, like the other themes, the development of the theme of people of God in the Old Testament through to the prophetic expectation find their fulfillment first of all in Jesus...Jesus is the true Israel, who fills and embodies the promise that made Israel and embodies God's intention for Israel, his people."*

1. The Gathering of a New People Around Jesus:

- Jesus initiates a "nucleus" of people who will become the true, new People of God, primarily through the selection of the 12 disciples.
- The number 12 is symbolic, representing the 12 tribes of Israel, signifying continuity with the Old Testament. *"The number 12 is clearly reflective of the 12 tribes of Israel...It almost signifies or has a symbolic value for the people of God."*
- This is further emphasized by Jesus establishing his church, ecclesia, in Matthew chapter 16.

1. The Meaning of "Church" (Ecclesia):

- The term "church" (ecclesia) should not be interpreted solely through a modern lens. It was often used in the Septuagint to refer to the assembly of God's people, Israel. *"Yet at this point, the word church that Jesus uses, the Greek term ecclesia,*

is a term that is used in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament to often refer to the assembly of God's people, Israel."

- Jesus is establishing a *new* assembly in continuity with the Old Testament assembly of Israel.

1. **Shepherd and Sheep Metaphor:**

- Jesus' description of himself as the "true shepherd" (John 10) gathering his sheep, and the use of the term "little flock" (Luke 12) are more than just metaphors.
- This imagery connects to Old Testament prophecies, particularly Ezekiel 34, where God promises to be the shepherd of his scattered flock and restore them. Jesus fulfills this prophecy by gathering a new flock centered around him. *"Now God is beginning to gather his sheep, his dispersed sheep through Jesus Christ, who now gathers his sheep, his followers, and his disciples."*

1. **Vine and Branches Metaphor:**

- Jesus as the "true vine" (John 15), with God as the gardener and his followers as the branches, also connects to Old Testament imagery, specifically Isaiah 5.
- Isaiah 5 depicts Israel as a vineyard that produced bad fruit. Jesus, as the true vine, restores the possibility of bearing fruit for God through those who abide in him.

1. **The Great Commission and Expansion to All Nations:**

- Jesus' command to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28) signifies the expansion of the People of God beyond ethnic Israel.
- Membership in God's people is now based on faith in Jesus Christ, not ethnicity. *"The difference now is that membership in God's people is no longer restricted to or based on ethnicity, that is, belonging to the nation of Israel, but now its sole requirement is faith in Jesus Christ"*

1. **The Book of Acts and the Expansion to the Gentiles:**

- The book of Acts demonstrates the expansion of the people of God to include Gentiles. Acts 1:8 is a rough outline for the rest of the book, starting in Jerusalem and then expanding to Judea, Samaria, and finally to the ends of the earth.
- The author of Acts makes a big deal out of choosing a 12th apostle which signifies the restoration of the 12 tribes of Israel.

1. Paul's Theology of the People of God:

- **Ephesians 2:11-22:** Paul envisions the uniting of Jews and Gentiles into one new humanity based on the death of Jesus Christ on the cross to bring about peace.
- **New Covenant:** The new covenant suggests that the promises of restoring a new people, of God restoring his people, Israel, and entering into a New Covenant relationship with them, is now being fulfilled in this new people of God that Jesus began to create.
- **Galatians 3:** Paul addresses the question of who are the true children of Abraham. He argues that Jesus is the true "seed" of Abraham, and those who belong to Christ are also considered Abraham's seed and heirs to the promise. *"...If you belong to Christ, then you...are Abraham's seed and heirs according to his promise."*
- **Romans 11:** Paul uses the tree and branch metaphor, with Israel as the natural branches and Gentiles as the wild branches, grafted into the same vine. This signifies one people of God, not two separate groups.
- **Chosen/Elect/Loved:** Paul often refers to his churches as "the elect," "chosen," or "loved ones" (Romans 1:7, Ephesians 1:3-4, Colossians 3:12). This language echoes the Old Testament descriptions of God's relationship with Israel (Deuteronomy 7:7-8).

1. Redemption language:

- This redemption language ultimately goes back to the redemption language found in the context of God rescuing his people from Egypt, especially the reference in Colossians chapters 1:12 and 13.
- Paul refers to redemption as what God accomplishes through Christ on behalf of his people in Romans 3.

1. Husband and Wife Metaphor:

- **Ephesians 5:** Paul compares the relationship between a husband and wife to the relationship between Christ and the church.
- The relationship between God and his people under the Old Covenant in the Old Testament, which is frequently described as the relationship of a husband to his wife.

Conclusion:

The lecture argues that the concept of the "People of God" undergoes a transformation in the New Testament. While rooted in Old Testament promises and expectations, particularly the restoration prophecies, it is fulfilled and expanded through Jesus Christ. Membership in this new People of God is now based on faith in Jesus, not ethnicity, uniting Jews and Gentiles into a new covenant community, the church.

4. Study Guide: Newman, Synoptic Gospels, Session 13, People of God (NT), Part 1

The People of God in the New Testament: A Study Guide

I. Key Concepts and Themes

- **Jesus as True Israel:** Jesus embodies and fulfills God's promises and intentions for Israel, recapitulating Israel's history in his own life and ministry.
- **The Gathering of a Nucleus:** Jesus gathers 12 disciples, mirroring the 12 tribes of Israel, forming the foundation of a renewed Israel.
- **The Church (Ecclesia):** The term "church" refers to a new assembly or gathering of people, in continuity with the Old Testament assembly of Israel. It is not necessarily the same as a modern-day church structure.
- **Shepherd and Flock:** Jesus as the Good Shepherd gathers his sheep (his followers), fulfilling the prophecy of God shepherding his people as described in Ezekiel 34.
- **Vine and Branches:** Jesus is the true vine, and his followers are the branches. This metaphor connects to the Old Testament image of Israel as a vineyard, emphasizing that true fruitfulness comes from abiding in Jesus.
- **Expansion to the Gentiles:** The Great Commission (Matthew 28) marks the expansion of God's people to include all nations, moving beyond the ethnic boundaries of Israel.
- **Acts and the Fulfillment of Prophecy:** The book of Acts demonstrates the fulfillment of Old Testament promises, particularly Isaiah, regarding the restoration of God's people and the inclusion of Gentiles.
- **Uniting of Jews and Gentiles:** Ephesians 2 speaks of the uniting of Jews and Gentiles into one new humanity through Christ, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecies of restoration.
- **The New Covenant:** The New Covenant, with its promise "I will be their God, and they will be my people," signifies the restoration of God's people, now being fulfilled in the new community centered on Jesus.

- **True Children of Abraham:** Galatians 3 identifies Jesus as the true seed of Abraham, and those who belong to Christ are also considered Abraham's seed and heirs to the promise.
- **Tree and Branches (Romans 11):** Illustrates the inclusion of Gentiles (wild branches) into the people of God, alongside the natural branches (Israel), all grafted into the same vine.
- **The Elect/Chosen Ones:** Paul frequently refers to his churches as "elect" or "chosen," drawing on Old Testament language of God's choosing and loving Israel.
- **Redemption as New Exodus:** Paul's use of redemption language echoes the Exodus, portraying God's rescue of his new people from the dominion of darkness into the kingdom of his Son.
- **Church as Bride:** Paul compares the relationship of Christ and the church to a husband and wife, drawing a parallel to the Old Testament depiction of God's relationship with Israel.

II. Quiz: Short Answer Questions

1. How does the choice of the 12 disciples relate to the Old Testament?
 - The choice of 12 disciples mirrors the 12 tribes of Israel, signifying Jesus' intention to create a renewed Israel. This demonstrates continuity with the Old Testament people of God and fulfills prophetic expectations of restoration.
1. In Matthew 16, what is significant about Jesus' use of the word "church" (ecclesia)?
 - Jesus' use of "ecclesia" (church) refers to a new assembly in continuity with the assembly of God's people, Israel, in the Old Testament. It signifies a new community being established, though not necessarily in the modern-day church structure sense.
1. How does the metaphor of Jesus as the Good Shepherd relate to the Old Testament?
 - The metaphor of Jesus as the Good Shepherd fulfilling God's promise as shepherd in Ezekiel 34. This emphasizes Jesus' role in gathering and restoring God's dispersed people.
1. Explain the significance of Jesus being the "true vine" in John 15.

- Jesus as the true vine signifies the restoration of the true vine of God's people, referencing the Old Testament image of Israel as a vineyard. By abiding in Jesus, the branches (his followers) can bear the fruit that God intended.
1. What is the significance of the Great Commission (Matthew 28) in relation to the people of God?
 - The Great Commission marks a shift to God's people to include all nations, expanding beyond the ethnic boundaries of Israel. This fulfills the prophetic vision of God's glory spreading to the ends of the earth.
 1. How does the book of Acts illustrate the expansion of the people of God?
 - Acts demonstrates how the gospel spreads from Jerusalem and Judea to Samaria and the ends of the earth, embracing groups of people that are more and more Gentile. This demonstrates the fulfillment of Old Testament promises of restoration.
 1. Explain Paul's concept of the "New Covenant" and how it relates to the people of God.
 - Paul's concept of the New Covenant, fulfilled through Jesus' death and resurrection, signifies the restoration of God's people. This restoration, as prophesied in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, is now being fulfilled in the new community centered on Jesus.
 1. According to Paul in Galatians 3, who are the true children of Abraham?
 - According to Paul, Jesus Christ is the true seed of Abraham, and those who belong to Christ, regardless of ethnicity, are also considered Abraham's seed and heirs to the promise.
 1. In Romans 11, what does the metaphor of the tree and branches signify?
 - This metaphor signifies the inclusion of Gentiles (wild branches) alongside Israel (natural branches) into one people of God, all connected to the same vine.
 1. How does Ephesians 5 describe the relationship between Christ and the church and what significance does that comparison have?
 - Ephesians 5 describes the relationship between Christ and the church as a marriage and this imagery ties in with Old Testament imagery about God's relationship with Israel. By using this metaphor Paul illustrates there is continuity between God's new people created by Jesus and God's intention for Israel.

III. Quiz Answer Key

1. The choice of 12 disciples mirrors the 12 tribes of Israel, signifying Jesus' intention to create a renewed Israel. This demonstrates continuity with the Old Testament people of God and fulfills prophetic expectations of restoration.
2. Jesus' use of "ecclesia" (church) refers to a new assembly in continuity with the assembly of God's people, Israel, in the Old Testament. It signifies a new community being established, though not necessarily in the modern-day church structure sense.
3. The metaphor of Jesus as the Good Shepherd fulfilling God's promise as shepherd in Ezekiel 34. This emphasizes Jesus' role in gathering and restoring God's dispersed people.
4. Jesus as the true vine signifies the restoration of the true vine of God's people, referencing the Old Testament image of Israel as a vineyard. By abiding in Jesus, the branches (his followers) can bear the fruit that God intended.
5. The Great Commission marks a shift to God's people to include all nations, expanding beyond the ethnic boundaries of Israel. This fulfills the prophetic vision of God's glory spreading to the ends of the earth.
6. Acts demonstrates how the gospel spreads from Jerusalem and Judea to Samaria and the ends of the earth, embracing groups of people that are more and more Gentile. This demonstrates the fulfillment of Old Testament promises of restoration.
7. Paul's concept of the New Covenant, fulfilled through Jesus' death and resurrection, signifies the restoration of God's people. This restoration, as prophesied in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, is now being fulfilled in the new community centered on Jesus.
8. According to Paul, Jesus Christ is the true seed of Abraham, and those who belong to Christ, regardless of ethnicity, are also considered Abraham's seed and heirs to the promise.
9. This metaphor signifies the inclusion of Gentiles (wild branches) alongside Israel (natural branches) into one people of God, all connected to the same vine.

10. Ephesians 5 describes the relationship between Christ and the church as a marriage and this imagery ties in with Old Testament imagery about God's relationship with Israel. By using this metaphor Paul illustrates there is continuity between God's new people created by Jesus and God's intention for Israel.

IV. Essay Questions

1. Explore the ways in which Jesus, as portrayed in the Gospels, embodies and fulfills the concept of "true Israel." How does this understanding shape our understanding of the people of God in the New Testament?
2. Discuss the significance of the Old Testament prophetic expectations in understanding the New Testament concept of the people of God. Provide examples from the lecture of how these expectations are fulfilled.
3. Analyze Paul's argument in Galatians 3 regarding the true children of Abraham. How does this argument challenge traditional notions of ethnicity and lineage in defining the people of God?
4. Compare and contrast the use of the "shepherd and flock" and "vine and branches" metaphors in the New Testament. What do these metaphors reveal about the relationship between Jesus and his followers?
5. Evaluate the extent to which the inclusion of Gentiles in the New Testament community represents a radical departure from or a continuation of God's plan for the people of God as revealed in the Old Testament.

V. Glossary of Key Terms

- **True Israel:** Jesus Christ as the embodiment and fulfillment of God's promises and intentions for Israel.
- **Ecclesia:** Greek term for "church," referring to an assembly or gathering of people.
- **New Covenant:** A renewed covenant between God and his people, prophesied in the Old Testament and inaugurated through Jesus Christ, characterized by forgiveness of sins and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
- **Seed of Abraham:** A term used by Paul to refer to Jesus Christ, and by extension, those who belong to Christ through faith.
- **Gentiles:** Non-Jewish people.
- **Election/Chosen:** The concept of God choosing certain individuals or groups for a specific purpose or relationship, often used in reference to both Israel and the church.
- **Redemption:** The act of being rescued or freed from slavery or bondage, often used in the context of the Exodus and Jesus' saving work.
- **New Exodus:** A reference to God's redemption of his people through Jesus Christ, parallel to the Exodus from Egypt in the Old Testament.
- **Restoration:** The act of bringing something back to its original or intended state, often used in the context of God restoring his people.
- **Nuptial Imagery:** The use of marriage and bridal metaphors to describe God's relationship with his people.

5. FAQs on Newman, Synoptic Gospels, Session 13, People of God (NT), Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Here is an 8-question FAQ based on the provided source, formatted in markdown:

#1. How does the New Testament present Jesus as fulfilling Old Testament prophecies related to the people of God?

The New Testament portrays Jesus as the true Israel, recapitulating Israel's story in his own life and ministry. He succeeds where Adam, Eve, and Israel failed in their testing. He fulfills the promise made to Israel and embodies God's original intention for His people. Jesus gathers a nucleus of followers, the twelve disciples, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, signifying the renewed Israel and the new people of God.

#2. What is the significance of Jesus using the term "church" (ecclesia) in Matthew's Gospel?

Jesus using the word "church" (ecclesia) refers to a new assembly or gathering of people, in continuity with the assembly of God's people, Israel, in the Old Testament. The term ecclesia was frequently used in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, to refer to the assembly of God's people, Israel. It suggests that Jesus is establishing a new community rooted in the Old Testament assembly but centered around him.

#3. How does Jesus' role as the "Good Shepherd" relate to the concept of the people of God?

Jesus identifies himself as the Good Shepherd who gathers his sheep, drawing on the Old Testament imagery, particularly from Ezekiel 34. In Ezekiel, God rebukes the leaders of Israel for failing to care for the flock (Israel). God then promises to be the shepherd and gather the scattered sheep. Jesus, as the Good Shepherd, fulfills this promise by gathering a new flock that centers around him, reflecting the restoration of God's people.

#4. What is the significance of Jesus as the "True Vine" in John 15?

Jesus presents himself as the true vine, with God as the gardener and his followers as the branches. This imagery contrasts with Isaiah 5, where Israel is depicted as a vineyard that produces bad fruit. Jesus, as the true vine, restores God's people, enabling them to bear the fruit that God intended. By remaining in Jesus, the branches (his followers) become part of the restored vine, signifying the renewal of the people of God.

#5. How did the role of ethnicity in the people of God shift from the Old Testament to the New Testament?

In the Old Testament, membership in the people of God was largely defined by ethnicity, specifically belonging to the nation of Israel. However, in the New Testament, this shifts. While Jesus is the true Israel, membership in the new people of God is based on faith in Jesus Christ, not on ethnic or national origin. This allows Gentiles to be included in the community of God's people.

#6. How does the Book of Acts illustrate the expansion of God's people?

The Book of Acts demonstrates the expansion of God's people from Jerusalem and Judea to Samaria and then to the ends of the earth, as stated in Acts 1:8. This expansion fulfills the prophetic vision of Isaiah, where God's salvation would extend to all nations. The inclusion of Samaritans and Gentiles in the church demonstrates this widening circle of God's people. The restoration of the 12th apostle, the re-uniting of the Southern and Northern Kingdoms, and the Gospel expanding to Rome all confirm the fulfillment of Old Testament expectations for the restoration of God's people.

#7. According to Paul, who are the true children or seed of Abraham?

Paul argues in Galatians 3 that the true seed of Abraham is Jesus Christ. However, he extends this concept to include those who belong to Christ. Through faith in Jesus, believers become Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. This means that belonging to Christ, rather than ethnic lineage, determines participation in the promises made to Abraham.

#8. How do metaphors like "election," "redemption," and "marriage" describe the people of God in the New Testament?

Paul often refers to churches as "the elect" or "chosen," drawing on Old Testament language describing God's relationship with Israel. The concept of redemption from slavery is used, echoing the Exodus story, with God rescuing believers from the dominion of darkness. The relationship between Christ and the Church is likened to that of a husband and wife, mirroring the Old Testament depiction of God's covenant relationship with Israel. These metaphors highlight the continuity between God's Old Testament and New Testament people, emphasizing God's love, choice, rescue, and covenant fidelity to His people.