

**Matthew in Biblical Perspective:
A Biography of Jesus of Nazareth the Christ –
“Seeing Jesus, the Promised King”**

Matthew 1–2

By [Dr. Harry Reeder III](#)

November 23, 2008 – Morning Sermon

We are starting a series today on the book of Matthew. Let me quickly tell you that we will finish the chapters in Genesis on the life of Joseph this spring but for Advent season, January and February up to Easter I want us to focus on this series on the Gospel of Matthew. Tonight we will have a short exposition of God's Word on the Christian virtue of Thanksgiving but this evening is our annual service of Thanksgiving. Would you be praying this day about what you would like to come and give thanks for this evening? We have some hymns and songs we are going to sing, a short exposition but you will be the sermon. So if you would just pray and think about what you would like to give thanks for so we can fill this place up and fill up the heavens with Thanksgiving to our Lord tonight. I look forward to being with you at 6 PM and I would like to echo that this is a great season for outreach with our walk-through nativity, the Briarwood ballet, the choir, the Christmas Eve candlelight service, festival and all of those things. Let's bring many people that normally would not come to this season's activities so that we can plant the seeds of the Gospel in their life. I want to mention one other thing about Thanksgiving this week. If you are here today and you don't have a place to have Thanksgiving dinner, whatever you do don't have that dinner by yourself. We have plenty of people and plenty of homes who would like to have you. If you will call me I will make sure you have a place to have a marvelous Thanksgiving dinner and as you can tell by looking at me that this church is full of good cooks and places to have good fellowship. So we don't want you to have this Thanksgiving alone. We have places and homes for you to have Thanksgiving with God's people this week. Please take advantage of that.

Now look with me at what I believe is the pivotal text in our study of the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew 16:13-15 says, *13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* This is the pivotal text in all of the Gospel of Matthew. Everything in the

first 15 chapters is led to this text. Everything after this text explains the text. "You are the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Matthew 16:17-20 says, *17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."* 20 Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ. The grass withers and the flower fades, this is the Word of our God and it abides forever and by His grace and mercy may be preached to you.

One may be thinking, "Harry, after a couple years in Genesis, why Matthew? Why are we headed there?" I would like to take this morning to answer why we are in the study of Matthew but maybe I can get you thinking about it. Did you know in the pieces of sermons and publications that we have out of the first two centuries of the Christian church that comes out of the ascension of Jesus Christ that no other book in the New Testament is quoted more or referred to more or esteemed more highly than Matthew's Gospel? It is the most quoted, the most esteemed, and the most referred to book in the first couple of hundred years of the church. And in the early church when they would disciple, they would teach them. We have 27 books here in the New Testament and 39 books in the Old Testament and 3x9 is 27 books in the New Testament. When they would disciple they would teach them to focus on three books before they went to the others; Matthew, the gateway to the New Testament and the hook to the Old Testament, Acts, the spread of the Kingdom and Romans, the message of the Gospel. Those are the three key books and one of them is Matthew.

Stop and think with me. What book precedes Matthew which is the last book of the Old Testament? It is that great Italian prophet, Malachi. Between Malachi and Matthew there is a white page and that white page covers 400 years. In other words, for about twice the age of our country God was silent. No word from the Lord was heard. Now Matthew records, not only is the Word of the Lord heard again but the last 60 years of the 400 years of silence were under the Roman Empire oppression, taxation, slavery and servitude. There are God's people with the Old Testament promising hope, deliverance and victory yet 400 years of absolute silence. For the fourth time they were under oppression; the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Greeks and now the Romans who totally dominated them. They were paying taxes. They were oppressed. They could do nothing. They were absolutely under bondage, 400 years.

Now Matthew proclaims, not only has the Word of the Lord been heard again upon the earth but now the God of the Word can be seen upon the earth. Christ has come. Christ is the One who is your hope, your deliverer and I proclaim to you God has spoken again and He will speak through Matthew. It will be added to by Mark, Luke and John. Also in the book of Acts and here are the letters to

the churches in the 27 epistles where the Lord has spoken upon the earth. The Word of the Lord has come in more than that it has come because the God of the Word is seen. The Word became flesh and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten from the Father full of grace and truth found in John 1:14. Hebrews 1:3 says, *“He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.”* God's Word is heard upon the earth but the Word of God has been heard and more than that the God of the Word has been seen, handled, touched and beheld.

This is an amazing study, the Gospel of Matthew. It is a study that is borne out of a man's life. Do you know what is really remarkable to me? One may be thinking, “Harry, why are we studying this one?” God's Word, Jesus is seen, the Word of the Lord has come, the completion of God's Word has been given to us and in Matthew is the sum, the center, the circumference and the substance of the good news of salvation and the roadmap of how to live for that Savior. Matthew himself, in just this Gospel, not only gives the message of the One who is the hope, it wasn't Abraham, Daniel, David, Moses, or Melchizedek but I'm going to tell you who is the hope Matthew says. This One is the fulfillment of every promise. This One alone can be your hope and satisfy the unfathomable need you have for hope as your deliverer. And how do I live for that Savior? Matthew lays out for you through the way that he displays Christ's life and ministry how to live.

There are four Gospels; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Why are they in that order? It is probably because in the early church they were put in that order out of their understanding of their chronology. The first was Matthew although there is some discussion as to whether Mark was first or not. I have done as much research as I can and I go with the tradition that Matthew is the oldest. Eusebius, the church historian acknowledges Matthew so here is this Gospel of Matthew being the oldest. Then Mark is written under Peter's direction, John Mark wrote the gospel of Mark. Then Luke was written. When was Luke written? It was written later when Paul was brought back to prison at Jerusalem. Luke while he was there with Paul talked to the Apostles and put together a historical account on the life of Jesus. Then the last one written was John and the way that John is written presupposes that you have read Matthew, Mark and Luke. It is interesting because John has a theological purpose. He is not just putting together a biography of Jesus. He has a very theological purpose why Jesus is understood as the Son of God; He is not only the Son of Man, He is 100% God, He is 100% man and the implications of all of that now and for eternity but John clearly the way he writes presupposes that you are aware of Matthew, Mark and Luke and that you have the facts of the biography of Christ's life.

Matthew, particularly, has written for you a biographical sketch, a biographical outline, a biography of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ that was verified by the Holy Spirit, rejected by His people and how this King Jesus who is the

Promised One from the Old Testament, that the Gospel of Matthew is an evangelistic biography. I want to make that clear. His purpose is evangelism. Does that surprise you? Do you remember when Matthew was converted? What was the next thing he did? By the way, Matthew's conversion is found three times in Matthew, Mark and Luke. All three of these Gospels record his conversion. The one that calls the least attention to his conversion and the events around it is in Matthew. Mark and Luke tell you something else. After Matthew was converted, the very next day he gave a dinner party for people to come meet his Savior. That's evangelism. Now Matthew has written an evangelistic biography of Jesus Christ, declaring that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Christ. He is the Messiah. He is the Christ. Jesus said, "Who do people say that I am?" Matthew is telling you what Peter confessed, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God," sent by the Father, verified by the Holy Spirit, rejected by His people Israel and now proclaimed as Messiah, King and Savior to all the nations until He returns in glory. That is the burden that Matthew has. It is an evangelistic, biographical tract. It is not exhaustive because Luke and Mark fill in some of the blanks.

Have you seen the way they are doing television programs now? It is where they give you a scene and then they put shots of different cameras on the scene as well. There was a movie out recently called *Vantage Point* in which it had one the event and then you saw that event through the eyes of six different people that were active in that event. That is the way the Gospels are. None of them are exhaustive. There is Matthew's burden, Matthew's perspective but they are all in agreement, they all add things and you put them together to get a harmony and an understanding of the life of Christ. Then, John caps them off with a theological treatise on who Jesus is and what Jesus has accomplished. In this study we are looking at Matthew.

Matthew has the most chapters in it. It is extremely extensive and it is written by Matthew. It wasn't until the last hundred or so years that was ever questioned. All the way back, all the church fathers that were discipled by the Apostles, they all acknowledge that Matthew wrote it. At the top of chapter 1 it says the Gospel according to Matthew. That was not in the original text. In fact none of the Gospels do the writers identify themselves. They all chose anonymity. We know who wrote them by looking internally at how they wrote it and by externally who affirmed back in those days who wrote it and you do the examination. There is no doubt Matthew wrote the Gospel of Matthew.

On your note sheet there are two questions. The first question is why the Gospel of Matthew? My second question is the same; why the Gospel of Matthew? One may be thinking, "Harry I know you're getting older but did you know you repeated yourself?" I did. Let me do the English deal here. Why the GOSPEL of MATTHEW? Why would the first book, most revered, most quoted in the early church be Matthew? Why not Peter, why not James, why not John, why did Matthew give us the first one to which the others developed? Why this so important book in our New Testament? Why Matthew?

Matthew was his “converted” name. It means a freed man. Does anybody remember his original name? His original name was Levi meaning a man of the law. So he was taken from the bondage of the law then freed by grace. Matthew. His father's name was Alpheus and Matthew was hated and despised in the Sea of Galilee and its environs. Harry, how do you know that? I know that because he was a publican, he was a tax gatherer. Here's the deal. When Rome came in and conquered, they would set up a taxation system and they would get a person from that country to be the collector of taxes from his countrymen. Do you remember how when Matthew was saved and came to Christ and the next day he throws a dinner party and what the Pharisees said? The Pharisees said, “Look, this Jesus eats with prostitutes and tax collectors, publicans! Can you believe that?” A publican or tax gatherer by other Israelites they looked at their fellow countrymen who worked for Rome and a new two things. Number one he is a thief because here is what Rome would say; “you have to collect this much money and anything you collect over that that is yours.” So they were constantly stealing from their own people. Secondly, they were instruments in the hands of the Roman Empire to keep the people under bondage. So they were considered traitors, treasonous, and most of the time they were told they had been excommunicated out of the synagogue. That is why in this very study of Matthew we will find out when someone denies Christ as their Lord and Savior yet they have been among God's people it says let them be considered a Gentile outside and a tax gatherer. A tax gatherer was lower than prostitution, lower than sexual immorality and this is the guy who was saved by grace called to be an Apostle, and gives us our first Gospel. That's who he is.

Now, why the Gospel of Matthew? Why Matthew? Why the Gospel of Matthew? Matthew has this burden. Let me give you three words. Your three key words are reveal, reject and reign. Matthew *reveals* that Jesus is the promised Messiah. It is this hope that we have a Messiah, a Christ, a Prophet, a Priest and King. This One is Jesus of Nazareth and Matthew reveals that. Secondly, Matthew also records the *rejection* of Jesus by his own people. Then he records the *reign* of Christ as King and Savior being proclaimed through all the nations from the rising to the setting of the sun and a new people of God, the new Israel that had been promised to Abraham, in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. I will call a people from among the nations who are not a people and I will make them My people. This great commission of the reign of Christ continues until this Christ as King returns again. That's why he's writing.

I want to back up and go outside the Bible to some historical recordings by a guy named Eusebius. Eusebius, in 115 A.D. which is less than 100 years after the ascension of Jesus, writes about Matthew. He tells us that Matthew had very likely already written something called the Logia which was a collection of the teachings of Jesus that probably migrated into his Greek written Gospel but even though it was written in Greek it was aimed at the Jews. Here's what happened. There is pretty firm evidence on this that Matthew after the ascension of Jesus

lived for about 15 years in Jerusalem and in the area ending up eventually in Antioch. Remember in the book of Acts the church of Jerusalem had a sister church in Antioch and Matthew ended up there. In fact it was the preacher at Antioch that acknowledged the Gospel of Matthew. Ignatius, Irenaeus, Papias the Bishop of Hierapolis, all of these people quoted from and acknowledged Matthew's gospel. Eusebius records that after 15 years of Matthew's ministry after the ascension of Jesus even migrating through all of the persecutions that were taking place from which the Church of Antioch came into existence, eventually Matthew left and we are told that he went on to Ethiopia and Egypt and he took the gospel to the nations. But first for 15 years he took the gospel to the Jewish people.

Before he left Matthew wrote this biography of Jesus to leave to them to tell them He is the Promised One. He is your hope. You rejected Him but you can still come to Him as Lord and Savior. That is Matthew's burden. You can see the Hebrew style of it. For instance, when Hebrews write they will make a statement with threes, triads all the way through it. 38 times Matthew does his threes and we will look at all 38 of those as we study the threes that he uses all the time. Who was the author of the first books of the Old Testament? It was Moses. How many books did he write? He wrote five. When we study the Gospel of Matthew we are going to see that the Gospel of Matthew is actually a collection of five books just like Moses.

So let me give you a quick outline. Chapters 1 through 4 that we will be covering for the next couple of months, through Advent season and in January, is the introduction of the prologue, the appearance of the King. Then chapters 5 through 9 are book one. Chapters 10 through 12 are book two. Chapters 13 through 15 are book three. Chapters 16 through 23 are book four. Chapters 24 through 28 are book five. Then the conclusion or the epilogue is Matthew 28:16-20; *All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...* That is the Great Commission. That is the result of those five books but I'm not quite through.

These five books are all framed the same way. They start with one of Jesus' teachings or sermons or discourses which they are called. Each book starts with the teaching of Jesus and then has the historical narrative of the results of that teaching in the lives of His people. Teaching - life. All five times there will be the teaching and then it will say, "and when He had finished these sayings..." then comes the narrative of the results in life. So in chapters 5 through 9 which is book one what is the first teaching? It is found in chapters 5 through 7 which is the Sermon on the Mount and then the results of the implications of that teaching are in chapters 8 and 9 which is the historical narrative. Then chapter 10 is the sermon He delivered to His disciples when He called them to be disciples and what does it mean to be a disciple. In chapters 11 through 12 is the result of their going out as disciples in Jesus' name.

The other big question is this, what about the Kingdom? So the third book begins with the teaching of the Kingdom was seven parables, seven Kingdom parables that the Kingdom of God is now but it is not yet in its fullness. So there are seven parables on the Kingdom of Christ, the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of Heaven in the name of King Jesus our Savior. That is given in chapter 13 and the Kingdom implications are given in chapters 14 and 15 which makes up the third book. The fourth book is the teaching at Caesarea Philippi of what Jesus will do to save His people and the church that He will build in chapter 16. Then comes His journey to Jerusalem to be delivered up for our salvation and the purchase of the church with His own blood. So He teaches in chapter 16 and then it is explained of what He does in chapters 17 to 23. Book 5 is His teaching from Mount Olive of when the end of time will come, the destruction of the Temple, the judgment upon Israel in 70 A.D. and in the coming of Christ; when will He come, when will be the close of the age and that is in chapters 24 and 25. Then His work on the cross, His resurrection and then it finishes with the Great Commission.

There is a point I want you to remember in giving you this outline which I will give to you in just a moment. In this study on the Gospel of Matthew there will be 65 references to the Old Testament. "Look My people Israel, Christ is the fulfillment." There will be 65 references and allusions to the Old Testament texts and events. There will be 44 prophecies that are fulfilled and declared fulfilled in the Gospel of Matthew. How did the Rabbis teach? They taught in parables. 15 of Jesus' 18 parables are found in the Gospel of Matthew. How do you know Jesus is the Messiah? "If you don't believe My words," He said, "look at My signs, wonders and miracles." 20 of the miracles of Jesus are found to verify His claim in the Gospel of Matthew. Here very clearly the Gospel of Matthew is declaring Christ is the fulfillment of all the promises of God, all the types, all the shadows, everything, Christ is the one that we are to look to in whom we put our trust.

In other words, Matthew is the gateway to understanding the New Testament. It's the hook to hold onto the Old Testament. So that Matthew is telling us in Christ and because of Christ the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed. The New Testament is the Old Testament revealed because of Christ our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Sustainer. You don't have a message Old Testament or a message New Testament. You have one message and that is God's glory through Christ, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer and Matthew is the linchpin whereby he makes the point that the Old Testament is fulfilled in Christ. All of the promises of God are yes and amen in Christ our Lord. Now is the gateway for me to understand the unfolding of the Kingdom in the book of Acts, the letters to the churches, Paul, Peter, Jude, James. Now is the gateway to my understanding of the New Testament.

Before I give you three takeaways to this study can I give you a do away? I don't know what else to call it. This is just an overview of Matthew but we will go to our first study in Matthew next week as we move into Advent season. The next study

will be Matthew one, the genealogy but I want you to do something between now and then. Please take the time to read the Gospel of Matthew in its entirety. It will take you one hour and 54 minutes. Will you just read through it? Don't drill down just read through it. We will drill down in our study of it. When you come to that book look at the discourse and what happened afterwards. Look at the second book and the teaching and what happened afterwards. Look at the third book and what He taught and what happened afterwards. Look at the fourth book and what He taught. Look at the five books of Matthew that correspond to the five books of Moses. Look at the five books of Moses which open up the Old Testament and the five books of Matthew which open up the New Testament and hook into the Old Testament. Just read through it. That's your do away.

Here are your takeaways. The first one is Matthew wants you to know something and that is God is always faithful to His promises and His Word but His people are many times faithless to the God of the Word. God is always faithful to His promises and His Word, 44 prophecies Matthew will make the point it is true in Jesus. There will be 65 allusions to Old Testament events that are pointing to this moment. This is what God's faithfulness is all about. It is that everything is yes, true, amen and eternally fulfilled in Jesus Christ who is our Lord and Savior. God is faithful to His Word. Now stop and listen. If we rejoice in that this Christmas season but God is faithful to His Word and He sent His Son so that not only the Word of God again is heard on the earth but the God of the Word was seen and the Word became flesh. Remember God's Word has other promises. There is a lake of fire. There is a judgment. There is a death attached to the high-handed sin against God. God will always fulfill His Word.

The good news is that His fulfillment of His Word in Christ can give you an anchor that when He fulfills the issues of eternity, hell, a new heaven and a new earth, this Christ will take you to glory then. God will not be mocked. His people may be faithless but God will always be true and faithful. What is the name of Christ in the book of Revelation? It is He who is faithful and amen. So be it forever. God is always faithful to fill all things in His Son and He has promised that it is appointed unto men once to die and then the judgment and there is only one hope that we have on that day. That hope is the One who came 2000 years ago and when He comes again He will take us to glory if He is our Lord and Savior. God is always faithful to His Word. God is always faithful to His promises.

Know the joy of seeing Christ as He clarifies and amplifies. Here is the Old Testament which is pointing to Christ and then when Christ comes don't you just love the way Matthew keeps doing this? What did Jesus say? "You have heard them say but I tell you." He clarifies. He amplifies. "You think that alone is adultery? Let me tell you how far adultery can go and where it begins, in your mind and in your heart. You think that's breaking the Sabbath? Let me tell you about the Sabbath as a gift from God and why God gave it to you." He is always clarifying and amplifying because God's faithfulness has sent us His Son who is not only the Word but is the Teacher of the Word. In His Word we are taught to

understand His Word through the lenses of a Christ centered view of life and He says, "Here's the Sabbath and I am the Lord of the Sabbath. Here is the law that brings you to Me and here is the law that you may now do because you love Me not to make Me love you. I loved you when you were a sinner but now that you have come to Me, I loved you first and you now love Me. So if you love Me now here is My law, keep My commandments and I want to tell you the implications of them and where they lead you." Notice how Matthew textures in the Lord's prayer, the Lord's table, the Lord's day all throughout his Gospel. He builds in the clarification and the amplification of all of the life that is in Christ and for Christ, the blessings and the call of the gospel.

The second take away is that Matthew lays before us in his outline of Christ's life and ministry, the roadmap for our life and ministry. Harry, what do you mean? In his five books what does everyone start with? They start with His teaching then life. Brothers and sisters, that's your life in Christ. God's Word, sound doctrine is what leads to sound life. Sound doctrine being taught, hearing the Word, being disciplined, being in the Word, studying the Word, hearing the Word preached. Romans 10:17 says, "*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*" 1 Corinthians 1:21 says, "*It pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.*" 2 Timothy 2:15 says, "*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.*"

The Christian life is not lived by intuition; "I think God is like this..." "I think this is the way a Christian should live..." The Christian life is lived by divine revelation and God's Word and therefore you and I must prioritize and make primary in our life the hungry, devouring, the humble listening to and learning of the Word of God. You can't be and do for Christ until you know who you are and what Christ has called you to be and do. Sincerity is not the measure of the Christian life. God's Word sincerely believed and followed is the measure. This is crucial today for throughout evangelical Christianity we have given up on the Word of God. We have given up on the teaching of God's Word even in our seminaries we are having to re-fight the battle of the authority of God's Word, the inerrancy of God's Word, the sufficiency of God's Word and we're having to go back and fight battles that certainly shouldn't surprise us because we have had to fight it from the garden. What does Satan love to do? Has God said, we must first of all declare it is not ritual, it is not religion, it is not by intuition, it is not my inclinations, it is God's Word that is the final authority for what I believe and what I am called to do as a man, a husband, a father, a pastor and a citizen. It is God's word that is the measure and direction for my life and I can't do what I don't know so God, give me hungry to hear Your Word, study Your Word and know Your Word. It is absolutely crucial.

We are in a day where the Word is being shoved away and churches are being gimmick driven, personality driven, program driven, cultural steroids are pumping up the numbers and without taking the time to understand that sound lives come

from sound doctrine and it is God's Word that must be known and heard. I need it preached. I needed open for me to study. I need someone who isn't preaching for my smile and won't stop with my frown but will preach God's Word to me in love to Christ and in love to me to speak the truth in love. I need that in my life and the church desperately needs that today. The pulpits have not simply become silent they have distrusted the authority, the inerrancy and the sufficiency of God's Word. We have gone everywhere else. We have even taken good things like media, fine arts and instead of letting them have their rightful God glorifying place, we have put them in the place many times of God's Word. We have taken God's Word that calls us to experience Him, sought the experience and proof texted our life from God's Word. Instead of taking the whole counsel of God and saying, "God conform me to Your Word, I long for passion and experience but with that passion and experience I want to be faithful to the Word of God, the whole counsel of God."

The battle that is fought in churches today, if there is not distrust in the authority, inerrancy and sufficiency of the Word then there is a distraction. So we are in the day of sermonettes and christianettes. We are in the day of entertainment and amusement instead of the day of study to show yourself approved, a workman handling accurately the Word of truth. My dear friends, as much as I would say that about the church I would call upon you. Please, by God's grace make God's Word a way of your life. Make God's Word the focus and heart of your life because you can't know Christ without it. I know the danger of simple knowledge for knowledge sake but that's not what I am talking about. Let us not be hearers of the Word only but doers, but you can't do what you don't know. By God's grace let's know to do, not for salvation but for our Savior who has saved us from all of our sins for His glory that I might enjoy Him.

Finally, the last takeaway is Jesus has appeared. Matthew 1:21 says, "*She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.*" Jesus has come. I know that we are a little overwhelmed right not and we are just wondering what's happening here and what's happening there. The foundations seemingly have been shaken. The church is marginalized and it's very easy for fear and despair to take hold. Matthew is telling us this in our last takeaway. Christ has come now we need not cry out in fear and despair. Look what the world is coming to. Now we cry out with joy. Look at Who has come to the world. It is not what is the world coming to but Who has come to the world. The Light of Life, the Savior of sinners, the One who takes and changes and glorifies Himself in sinners saved by Christ, it is this Christ who has come.

If I could go back and rework the English language I would do away with "Christianity" so that we could say "Christ-y-anity." We kind of lose Christ even in our term, don't we? Christ is the center. He is the fulfillment of everything. He is my hope, He is my joy, He is my life, He is my deliverer, He is my Savior. Israel, I don't want to be like Israel that is looking for a world Messiah. I want to look for a Messiah who will take the world for His glory. It is this Christ that is my

unmistakable hope. It is this Christ unmistakable keeper of all the promises of God. It is this Christ who is everything. Matthew lived for 15 years in Israel and before he went to the nations he went back to the people of Israel and he said to them, "It is Christ who is your hope. It is Christ who is your life." Everything in Christianity rises and falls on the veracity of what we are about to study in 28 chapters. If it's not true, word by word, phrase by phrase, then we are to be pitied because it is Christ. It is of Christ, it is from Christ, to Christ, I can't know the Father without Him and the Holy Spirit has come to bring me to Him that I might glorify the Father. Make Him preeminent in my life and be filled with His Spirit so that Christ is all and in all.

One day a publican went to his post to steal more money. A publican went to his post as an outcast of the people that were all around him, despised and hated. One day that tax gatherer went to his post at a place called Capernum and the next day he is inviting people to meet the One who save him from his sins on that day, Jesus Christ. It is that Gospel of Matthew that we study now. It is that Gospel that brings us to Christ in all of His glory. It is that Gospel that not only brings us to Christ in His glory, it is that Gospel that gives us the way of life to know Him in the faithful hearing of His Word and study of His Word. Then, we are to serve Him with all of our heart. My brothers and sisters, would you pray? With great expectation I go to this book with you because I know what I need in my heart. Would you pray that it would ferment in all of our hearts, "Christ, You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God but blessed are you Simon, flesh and blood has not revealed this to you." The preacher can't do it.

This is heavily upon my heart. Students please listen to me. It is not the job. It is not the siren call of promiscuous sex. It is not addictions. Married couples, singles, college students, boys and girls, it is not power. It is not money. It is not prestige. It is not anything in this world that can fill that deep pit in your soul and in your heart. None of it will fill you. It is not baptism and no preacher can give it to you. It is the Holy Spirit who brings you to Christ and you say, "Christ is my all. Jesus I do now receive You." More than all in Him I find. He has granted me forgiveness. I am His, He is mine. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the time together in Your Word. Would You speak to our hearts in the silence of this moment? Holy Spirit do Your work. Jesus, name above of all names, beautiful Savior, wonderful Counselor, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, may we know the fullness and the freedoms of our hope in You. May we be called by that hope to not only love You and serve You but to bring others to You, O Christ our King, our saving King. We rejoice that You are our Redeemer and our Lord. If there is one reading this that has not come to You may they flee this day to Christ who saves. May they flee like Matthew this day that the next day will be a brand new day, the day of eternal life. I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.

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