

*Kingdom Calling -
An Introduction*

Matthew 4:18-7:29

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SERMON SERIES – THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

When I have the opportunity to spend time with someone trying to figure out the Christian faith, someone who is a spiritual "tire-kicker", and when they're looking for guidance on reading material, I always encourage them to read the story of Jesus' life.

There's a lot of literature, and some quick formulas, which focus on Jesus' death and resurrection and heaven. But much of that misses out on the life of Jesus. What was he like. What did he say? Where did he go? What kind of friends did he have? What did he like to do?

Seems to me that if we're going to commit our lives to a relationship with someone, to follow someone, it is very fair and proper to ask these questions about that person.

I wouldn't want to see anyone marry a person about whom they could NOT answer these questions. Equally so, then, in committing your life to following a person as your spiritual master.

Wouldn't you agree?

So – read the stories of Jesus' life.

And I suggest the four of them as found in the bible – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

In fact, they should be regular reading not only for spiritual tire-kickers, but also for committed believers – to be read, and re-read all our lives.

When I was in my study leave earlier this year it struck me that I've never taken you through a careful, verse-by-verse, study of any of the biblical accounts of Jesus' life.

So maybe it's high time we do that!

The account we've settled on is Matthew – because it was written to primarily religious people, who have been believers in and followers of God their whole life, who were serious about their faith.

Many of you would label yourselves as religious people, believers your whole life, spiritually serious. So *Matthew* seems to me to be a good fit.

Yes?

Matthew was written to Jewish readers

to proclaim Jesus as
the promised Messiah,
the fulfillment of the history of Israel,
the fullness of all Old Testament prophecy,
the completion of God's plan of salvation,
the KING.

It's a beautifully written message, filled with carefully crafted literary devices:

- mountain (Galilee, transfiguration, olives, ascension – all referring back to Israel's encounter with God on Mt.Sinai)

- the nations / outsiders being gathered in; stubborn insiders are cast out.

- Jesus fulfills OT prophecy

- Messiah of Israel

- descendant of David & Abraham

- typology: the new Moses and the new Israel... rolled into one (flight to Egypt; temptation in desert; baptized in the Jordan; "decalogue" on the mountain; Christ the Passover Lamb)

And this:

- Matthew is structured deliberately after the Ancient Jewish Bible, what we have as the first five books of our Old Testament, the Pentateuch.

It has a prologue and epilogue, and between that five major sections, each built around a major sermon delivered by Jesus. Five sections – Five sermons – the Five books of the Pentateuch. Jewish readers would resonate with this.

Prologue – The Coming Of The King (1:1 – 4:17)

4:17 – "From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent..."
the unlikely heritage of the King

I – Kingdom Calling (4:18 – 7:29)

7:28 - Now when Jesus had finished saying these things....
about discipleship and living the Kingdom way
- sermon on the mount (ch.5-7)

II – Kingdom Power (8:1 – 11:1)

11:1 – Now when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples...
about apostleship and missional service to the King
- sermon for the apostles (ch.10)

III – Kingdom Obedience (11:2 – 13:53)

13:53 – When Jesus had finished these parables...
how Israel stumbles, and disciples are taught the secrets of the Kingdom
- sermon of Kingdom parables (ch.13)

IV – Kingdom Caring (13:54 – 19:1)

19:1 – When Jesus had finished saying these things...
on caring and community within the Kingdom
- sermon for community leaders (ch.18)

V – Kingdom Coming (19:2 – 26:1)

26:1 – When Jesus had finished saying all these things...
the Kingdom will come, and will bring judgement
sermon on the mount of olives (ch.24-25)

Epilogue – The King Enthroned

26:2 – 28:20
the death and resurrection and eternal authority of the King

We've made it through the prologue.

1:1 – 4:17 “Coming Of The King”

(Taken from *Matthew For Everyone I & II*, NT Wright)

- a. 1.1-1.17 “Coming Of The King – His Family”
- b. 1.18-25 “Coming Of The King – His Birth”
- c. 2.1-12 “Coming Of The King – When Kings Come Marching In”
- d. 2.13-23 “Coming Of The King – In Joseph's Footsteps”
- e. 3.1-10 “Coming Of The King – The Way Prepared”
- f. 3.11-17 “Coming Of The King - Baptized”
- g. 4.1-11 “Coming Of The King - Tempted”
- h. 4.12-17 “Coming Of The King - Announced”

And now we move into the first of five major teaching units of *Matthew*.

4:18 – 7:29 Book 1 “Kingdom Calling”

It's built and placed to make people think of Moses receiving the ten commandments from God on Mt.Sinai. Jesus, giving the New Kingdom law in the Sermon on the Mount.

I've shown the road map of what lies ahead, for those of you who like to know where we're going.

(Taken from *Matthew For Everyone I & II*, NT Wright)

- a. 4.18-25 “Kingdom Calling – The Disciples”
- b. 5.1-12 “Kingdom Calling – Blessed”
- c. 5.13-20 “Kingdom Calling – Fulfilling The Law”
- d. 5.21-26 “Kingdom Calling – Murder And Reconciliation”
- e. 5.27-37 “Kingdom Calling – Keeping Covenant”
- f. 5.38-48 “Kingdom Calling – Loving Enemies”
- g. 6.1-6 “Kingdom Calling – Secret Piety”
- h. 6.7-15 “Kingdom Calling – The Lord's Prayer”
- i. 6.16-24 “Kingdom Calling – Fasting And Treasures”
- j. 6.25-34 “Kingdom Calling – Worry”
- k. 7.1-6 “Kingdom Calling – Judging Others”
- l. 7.7-12 “Kingdom Calling – Prayer”
- m. 7.13-23 “Kingdom Calling – Two Ways”
- n. 7.24-29 “Kingdom Calling – True Obedience”

For now, though, let's just listen to the message of Book 1 of Matthew.
Let's hear how the Holy Spirit has spoken to the Church for 2000 years.
Book 1 in the account of the life of Jesus.
The Word of the Lord.

READERS:

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Matthew 4:18-7:29

Eric 4:18 As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. 19And he said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.’ 20Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. 22Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Linda 23 Jesus* went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news* of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. 24So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. 25And great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

Ken 5.1 When Jesus* saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

3 ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 ‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 ‘Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6 ‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7 ‘Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

8 ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 ‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

10 ‘Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 ‘Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely* on my account. 12Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Eric 13 ‘You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

14 ‘You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Linda 17 ‘Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil. 18For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter,* not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.

19Therefore, whoever breaks* one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Ken 21 'You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, "You shall not murder"; and "whoever murders shall be liable to judgement." 22But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister,* you will be liable to judgement; and if you insult* a brother or sister,* you will be liable to the council; and if you say, "You fool", you will be liable to the hell* of fire. 23So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister* has something against you, 24leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister,* and then come and offer your gift. 25Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court* with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. 26Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

Eric 27 'You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery." 28But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.* 30And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.*

Linda 31 'It was also said, "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce." 32But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Ken 33 'Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, "You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord." 34But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37Let your word be "Yes, Yes" or "No, No"; anything more than this comes from the evil one.*

Eric 38 'You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." 39But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; 40and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; 41and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. 42Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

Linda 43 'You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy." 44But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. 46For if you love

those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax-collectors do the same? 47And if you greet only your brothers and sisters,* what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Ken 6:1'Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

2 'So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. 3But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

Eric 5 'And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. 6But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

7 'When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. 8Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

9 'Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

10 Your kingdom come.

Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.*

12 And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And do not bring us to the time of trial,*
but rescue us from the evil one.*

14For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you;

15but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Linda 16 'And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. 17But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

Ken 19 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust* consume and where thieves break in and steal; 20but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust* consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Eric 22 'The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; 23but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

Linda 24 'No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.*

Ken 25 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink,* or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? 28And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, 29yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 30But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31Therefore do not worry, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear?" 32For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33But strive first for the kingdom of God* and his* righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

34 'So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

Eric 7:1'Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. 2For with the judgement you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. 3Why do you see the speck in your neighbour's* eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? 4Or how can you say to your neighbour,* "Let me take the speck out of your eye", while the log is in your own eye? 5You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbour's* eye.

Linda 6 'Do not give what is holy to dogs; and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under foot and turn and maul you.

Ken 7 'Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. 8For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. 9Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? 10Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? 11If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

Eric 12 'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

Linda 13 'Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy* that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. 14For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Ken 15 'Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? 17In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. 18A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20Thus you will know them by their fruits.

Eric 21 'Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord", will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only one who does the will of my Father in heaven. 22On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?" 23Then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers."

Linda 24 'Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. 25The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. 26And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!'

Ken 28 Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, 29for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.