



GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 101

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Most books of the Bible don't come with standard bylines, and the Gospel of Matthew is no exception. While early Christian tradition attributes authorship of this gospel to Matthew, one of Jesus' disciples, many modern scholars dispute the notion. Instead, scholars contend the author of Matthew was likely a Jewish man writing around 80 CE who drew upon the Gospel of Mark (including 600 of Mark's 661 verses) but also expanded the narrative.

Even if the Apostle Matthew is not the writer of the gospel, his story gives us insight into the life and ministry of Jesus. Matthew, also known as Levi, is a tax collector, a role viewed with disdain. By selecting Matthew as a disciple, Jesus shows again by example that all people are beloved children of God, that all are worthy of love, forgiveness, and redemption. While Matthew appears in all four gospels and in the Book of Acts, we know very little about the rest of his life or how he died, only that he was a faithful companion and disciple of Jesus.

ABOUT THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

The Gospel of Matthew is one of the three synoptic gospels, along with Mark and Luke. These three gospels share many of the same stories and sometimes the same words. Despite some similarities, Matthew expands on key teachings of Jesus and features a number of parables and stories not found in the other gospels. For instance, it's only in Matthew that we hear about the Magi making their trek across the desert with gifts for baby Jesus.

The Gospel of Matthew includes the Great Commission to go and make disciples of all nations. In Matthew, we hear more reflections on Jesus' infancy and on the resurrection than in the other gospels. Matthew presents the Beatitudes (for example, blessed are the poor in spirit) in the famous Sermon on the Mount and articulates the duty of all Christians to care for those in need in chapter 25. Matthew is structured around five discourses, essentially five distinct teachings that share a similar ending or cue: "when Jesus had finished saying these things."

The Gospel of Matthew seeks to encourage and strengthen the Jewish Christian community, reminding them of their rich traditions even as new expressions of faith emerge. Matthew presents Jesus as the King of the Jews, tracing his genealogy to Abraham, the father of the Jews. Throughout the narrative of Matthew, the gospel proclaims a singular story of Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah.



MATTHEW SOUNDBITES

She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. *Matthew 1:21*

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. *Matthew 5:3-4*

Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. *Matthew 5:17*

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal. *Matthew 6:19*

Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. *Matthew 7:7*

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. *Matthew 11:28*

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. *Matthew 16:18*

For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them. *Matthew 18:20*

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. *Matthew 22:37*

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. *Matthew 28:19*

