

The Gospel of Matthew

3.

Jesus' Debut: Authority and Compassion. Dawn in Galilee
(4:17-25).

The Sermon on the Mount: Magisterial Teaching, A Charter
for Discipleship. Part 1 (5:1-32)

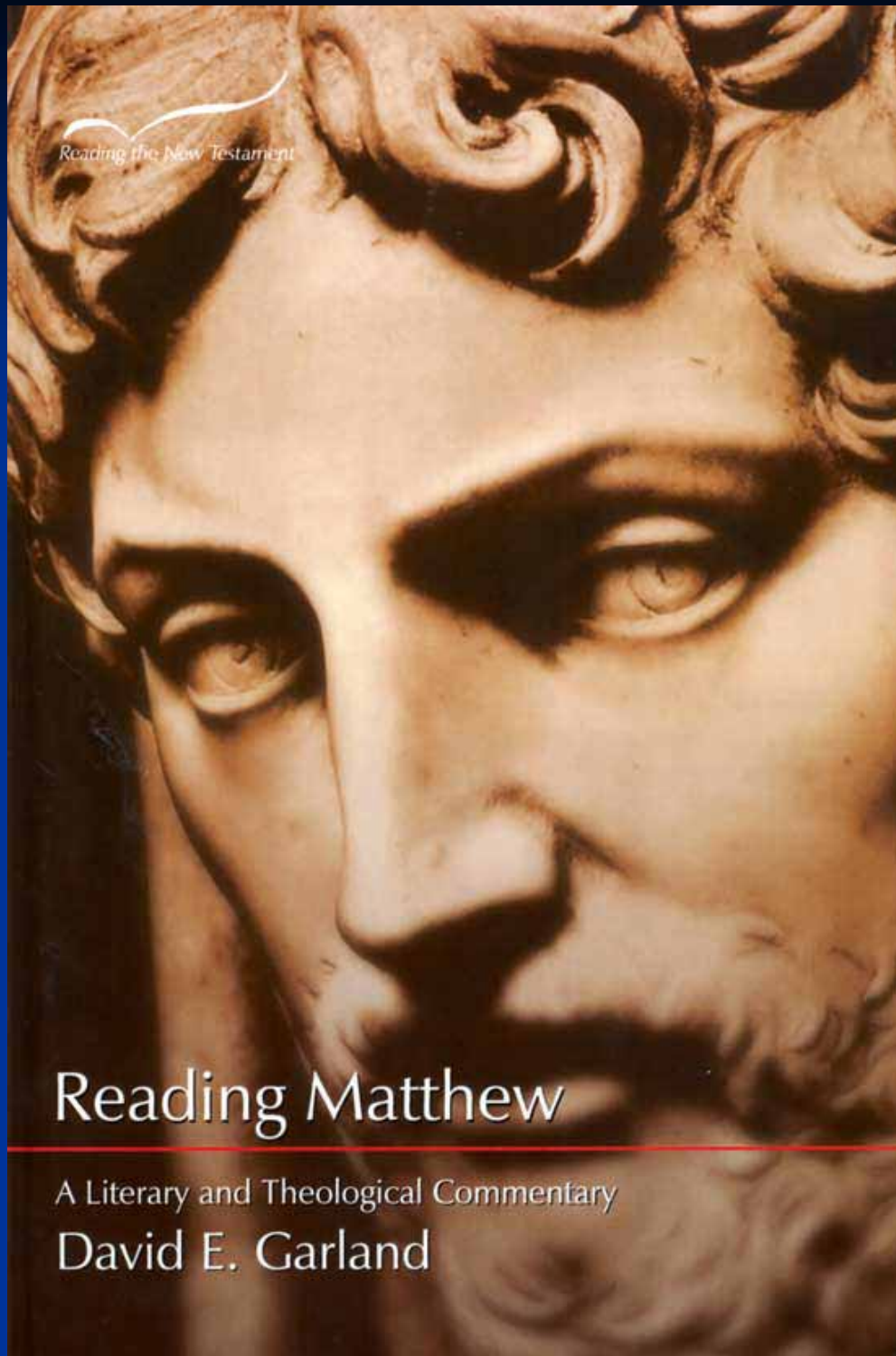
Sunday, December 11, 2005

10 to 11 am in the Parlor.

Everyone is welcome!

St. John in the Wilderness

**God is Israel old and new,
write in our hearts the lessons of
your law;
prepare our minds to receive the
gospel
made visible in your Son Jesus
Christ**



- **Reading Matthew. A Literary and Theological Commentary**, David E. Garland, Smyth & Helwys, 2001, ISBN 1-57312-274
- **Dr. Garland** is Professor of Christian Scriptures and Associate Dean for Academic Services at George W. Truett Theological Seminary, Baylor University

INTERPRETING
I · B · T
BIBLICAL TEXTS

THE
GOSPEL
OF
MATTHEW

Donald Senior

- **The Gospel of Matthew** (**Interpreting Biblical Texts Series**), Donald Senior, Abingdon Press, 1997, ISBN 0-687-00848-4
- **Dr. Senior** is Professor of New Testament Studies at Catholic Theological Union, Chicago.



THE NEW INTERPRETER'S BIBLE
A COMMENTARY IN TWELVE VOLUMES

VOLUME
VIII

NEW TESTAMENT
ARTICLES

MATTHEW

MARK

- “Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections on the Gospel of Matthew,” by M. Eugene Boring, in: **The New Interpreter's Bible. A Commentary in Twelve Volumes. Volume VIII: New Testament Articles. Matthew. Mark.** Abingdon Press, 1995, ISBN 0-687-27821-X
- **Dr. Boring** is Professor of New Testament at Brite Divinity School, Texas Christian University, Forth Worth, Texas

- **Introducing Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God (Matthew 1:1—4:16)**
 - The Birth of the Messiah: The Fulfillment of God's Promises (1:1-25)
 - From Judea of David to the Galilee of the Gentiles (2:1-23)
 - Getting Ready: God's Son in the Wilderness (3:1—4:11)
 - Dispelling the Darkness in Galilee (4:12-16)
- **Jesus' Ministry to Israel - Part 1. Teaching, Healing, and Calling the Lost Sheep (Matthew 4:17—10:42)**
 - **Jesus' Debut: Authority and Compassion. Dawn in Galilee (4:17-25)**
 - **The Sermon on the Mount: Magisterial Teaching, A Charter for Discipleship (5:1—8:1)**
 - Jesus ascends the mountain (5:1-2)
 - The Beatitudes (5:3-12)
 - The mission of disciples of Jesus to change the world (5:13-16)
 - The fulfillment of the law by Jesus: the greater righteousness demanded of his disciples (5:17-48)
 - Murder, Adultery, Divorce
 - Oaths, Retaliation, Love of Enemies
 - Directions on piety (6:1-18)
 - Directions on money (6:19-34)
 - Directions on social relationships (7:1-12)
 - Warnings (7:13-27)
 - Reaction of the crowds; descent from the mountain (7:28—8:1)
 - Restoring Life to Others: Jesus the Healer (8:2—9:35)
 - Great Harvest and Great Dangers: The Mission Discourse (9:36—10:42)
- **Jesus' Ministry to Israel - Part 2. Rejection and Confession (Matthew 11:2—16:20)**
 - Doubt, Indifference, and Dissent (11:2—12:45)
 - The Parable Discourse: the Mysteries of the Kingdom Revealed (12:46—13:54)
 - The Mission Resumes (13:54—16:12)
 - Rejection in Nazareth (13:54-58)
 - The Death of John (14:1-12)
 - Two Great Signs (14:13-36)
 - A Dispute with Israel; An Opening to the Gentiles (15:1-28)
 - Healing and Feeding the Multitudes; Demand for a Sign (15:29—16:12)
- **Jesus' Passion and Resurrection (Matthew 16:21-28:20)**
 - The Journey to Jerusalem (16:13—20:34)
 - Confession at Caesarea Philippi (16:13-28)
 - Transfiguration (17:1-21)
 - Living Together as the Family of God: Life Within the Community of the Kingdom (17:22—18:35)
 - Teachings on the Journey (19:1—20:16)
 - The Conclusion of the Journey (20:17-34)
 - In the Holy City: Conflict, Death, and Resurrection (21:1—28:15)
 - The Messiah in the Temple (21:1-17)
 - The Teacher and His Opponents (21:18—22:46)
 - False Teachers Lead Others to Ruin: Condemnation of the Scribes and Pharisees (23:1-39)
 - The Coming of the Son of Man and the Judgment of the World (24:1—25:46)
 - The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus. Finale (26:1—28:15)

Jesus' Ministry to Israel

Matthew 4:17—16:20

Jesus' Ministry to Israel

Introduction

- We now begin the second major division of the gospel, Matthew 4:17—16:20
 - Presents Jesus' public ministry in Israel
 - Begins in 4:17 with phrase **“From that time ...”**
 - Two major blocks:
 - **Matthew 4:17—10:42:** Jesus teaches, heals, calls his disciples on a mission to the Lost Sheep of Israel
 - **Matthew 11:1—16:20:** Jesus faces doubt, censure, rebuff from Israel as his disciples grow closer to him and confess him as Jesus, Son of God.

Matthew 4:1—16:20

Jesus' Ministry to Israel

First Block

- In the first block, Matthew 4:17—10:42:
 - Jesus announces the advent of the Kingdom of Heaven and explains what is required of his disciples (4:17—7:28)
 - Performs miracles of healing (8:1—9:35)
 - Sends his disciples on mission to the lost sheep of the Israel (9:36—10:42)

Matthew 4:1—10:42

Jesus' Ministry to Israel

First Block

- In the first block, Matthew 4:17—10:42:
 - Jesus announces the advent of the Kingdom of Heaven and explains what is required of his disciples (4:17—7:28)
 - 4:17-25: Introductory / Transitional Segment
 - 5:1—7:28: The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 4:1—10:42

Jesus' Debut: Authority and Compassion. Dawn in Galilee

Matthew 4:17-25

Jesus' Debut

Introduction

- Three parts:
 - Jesus proclaims the Kingdom of Heaven (4:17)
 - Calls disciples to be fishers of people (4:18-22)
 - Summarizes Jesus' ministry in Galilee (4:23-25)

Matthew 4:17-25

Jesus' Debut

Kingdom of Heaven

- Matthew uses the phrase “kingdom of heaven” 32 times, and “kingdom of God” only four times.
- The phrase “kingdom of heaven” is not found in the other gospels.
- It refers to “God’s transcendent work and lordship that is coming down from heaven” (H. Traub)

Matthew 4:17

Jesus' Debut

Calls Disciples

- Jesus calls four disciples with the simple command, **“Follow me.”**
- In Rabbinic tradition:
 - A disciple chose his own master.
 - A disciple's allegiance was to the law first, and he could transfer to other masters.
- Jesus:
 - Chose his own disciples.
 - Demanded absolute allegiance to himself.

Matthew 4:18-22

Jesus' Debut

Summarizes Jesus Ministry

- Jesus preaches, teaches, heals.
- People come from all points of the compass:
 - Galilee (northern region)
 - Decapolis (= league of 10 Greek cities on the eastern and southern shore of Lake Galilee)
 - Jerusalem and Judea (southern region)
 - Transjordan / “Beyond the Jordan” (east bank of the Jordan)

Matthew 4:23-25

**The Sermon on the
Mount: Magisterial
Teaching, A Charter for
Discipleship**

Matthew 5:1—8:1

Sermon on the Mount

Introduction

- Likely was composed by Matthew from various sayings of Jesus to reflect the central themes of Jesus' teachings.
- Answers the question: How should we live as followers of Jesus?
- The answer Jesus gives seems awesomely demanding, impossible – yet obedience to the demands is required to enter the kingdom of heaven (5:20)
 - The issue of the practicality of the demands did not arise for Matthew.

Matthew 5:1—8:1

Sermon on the Mount

Introduction

- An Outline of the Sermon on the Mount:
 - **5:1-2**: Jesus ascends the mountain.
 - **5:3-12**: The Beatitudes.
 - **5:13-16**: The mission of disciples of Jesus to change the world.
 - **5:17-48**: The fulfillment of the law by Jesus: the greater righteousness demanded of his disciples.
 - Murder, Adultery, Divorce
 - Oaths, Retaliation, Love of Enemies
 - **6:1-18**: Directions on piety.
 - **6:19-34**: Directions on money.
 - **7:1-12**: Directions on social relationships.
 - **7:13-27**: Warnings.
 - **7:28—8:1**: Reaction of the crowds; descent from the mountain.

Highlighted = today's coverage

Matthew 5:1—8:1

Sermon on the Mount

Jesus Ascends the Mountain

- The **Jesus—Moses parallel** that was begun in Matthew's Nativity story continues.
- Jews in Jesus' day believed the Messiah would be like the redeemers of Israel who had come before, for Moses had declared that:

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. (Deuteronomy 18:15 NRSV)

Matthew 5:1-2

Sermon on the Mount

Outline

- An Outline of the Sermon on the Mount:
 - 5:1-2: Jesus ascends the mountain.
 - **5:3-12: The Beatitudes.**
 - 5:13-16: The mission of disciples of Jesus to change the world.
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 - 7:28—8:1: Reaction of the crowds; descent from the mountain.

Matthew 5:3-12

Sermon on the Mount

The Beatitudes

- The **beatitude** (Latin) or **makarism** (from the Greek word for blessing) was a common form of saying in the Greek world.
- It can be found in the Old Testament, and in Jewish and pagan literature.
- Jesus uses **beatitudes** in the same ways found in other Jewish literature. Two traditions:
 - In the **wisdom tradition**, beatitudes declare the present happiness and rewards of those presently in fortunate circumstances (e.g. Sirach 25:7-9)
 - In the **prophetic tradition**, beatitudes declare the future happiness of those presently in bad circumstances, who will be vindicated when the kingdom of God comes. (Isaiah 30:18; Isaiah 32:20, Daniel 12:12)

Matthew 5:3-12

Sermon on the Mount

The Beatitudes

- Matthew's Beatitudes can be divided into:
 - Two stanzas of four beatitudes (5:3-6 and 5:7-10), framed by the promise "theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (5:3 and 5:10)
 - A final, longer ninth beatitude marking a transition (5:11-12)

Matthew 5:3-12

Sermon on the Mount

Beatitudes: First Stanza

- The first stanza of four beatitudes deal with our disposition towards God
- **“Congratulations to the poor in spirit”**
 - The economically poor in the Hebrew scriptures included the religious connotation that their earthly suffering made them aware of their dependence upon God.
 - Matthew’s “poor in spirit” = those who know their dependence on God, their need of God
 - Not a watered-down spiritualized version of Luke’s the “poor,” for it includes those in economic poverty.

Matthew 5:3-6

Sermon on the Mount

Beatitudes: First Stanza

- **“Congratulations to those who mourn.”** This refers to:
 - Those who “see this suffering aeon as it is” (R Bultmann).
 - Who grieve over evil and the frustrations of God’s purpose in creation (Ezekiel 9:4).

As opposed to those who:

- Are duped by the world’s charms and live unperturbed lives.
- Who are at home with war and injustice.

Matthew 5:3-6

Sermon on the Mount

Beatitudes: First Stanza

- **“Congratulations to the meek.”**
 - The meek are powerless, know their dependence on God and do not exalt in their own sufficiency
 - Psalm 37:11: **But the meek shall inherit the land, and delight themselves in abundant prosperity. (NRSV)**

Matthew 5:3-6

Sermon on the Mount

Beatitudes: First Stanza

- **“Congratulations to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.”** Refers to those:
 - Who “hunger and thirst” for God’s will to be done in their lives (Amos 8:11).
 - Who “hunger and thirst” for fellowship with God.

Matthew 5:3-6

Sermon on the Mount

Beatitudes: Second Stanza

- The second stanza of four beatitudes deals with our demeanor towards others.
- **“Congratulations to the merciful”**
 - Mercy is not mere sentiment, but includes action to help the Other.
- **“Congratulations to the pure in heart”**
 - The heart in ancient times was more than the place of emotions.
 - It was center of a person’s being, the place where decisions are made.
 - “Pure in heart” = moral purity.

Matthew 5:7-10

Sermon on the Mount

Beatitudes: Second Stanza

- **“Congratulations to the peacemakers”**
 - Refers to those who make peace between individuals, who work to reconcile one individual to another.
- **“Congratulations to those persecuted for righteousness sake”**
 - Righteousness = doing what is pleasing to God.
 - Jewish martyrs were accounted as saints (2 Macc 6:18—7:42)

Matthew 5:7-10

Sermon on the Mount

Ninth Beatitude

- “Congratulations to you when people revile you and utter all kinds of evil against you on my account”
- A switch to second person: Jesus now directly addresses the community of followers about him.
- Implies a “high Christology” (Christology = the study of “Who is Jesus?”). Persecution because of ties with **Jesus** carries a reward similar to persecution for **righteousness** (righteousness = doing what is pleasing to God).

Matthew 5:7-10

Sermon on the Mount

Outline

- An Outline of the Sermon on the Mount:
 - 5:1-2: Jesus ascends the mountain.
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 - 6:1-18: Directions on piety.
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 - 7:13-27: Warnings.
 - 7:28—8:1: Reaction of the crowds; descent from the mountain.

Matthew 5:13-16

Sermon on the Mount

Mission to Change the World

- Jesus now uses three images (**salt**, **light**, and a **city on a hill**) to clarify that *the mission of his followers is to change the world*.
- **“You are the salt of the earth”**
 - Meaning not immediately apparent.
 - Could reflect salt’s usefulness and necessity as a seasoning, preservative, fire catalyst, fertilizer.
 - Salt was also used in the Hebrew Scriptures as the binding of covenants to suggest their permanence. Garland suggests best explanation is: “You are the salt of the earth” = You are the witnesses to the covenants in the world.

Matthew 5:13-16

Sermon on the Mount

Mission to Change the World

- **“You are the light of the world.”**
 - A light’s function is not to bring attention to itself, but to reveal with clarity and starkness the reality about it.
 - The follower of Jesus must go where it is dark and reveal true reality.
 - However:
- **“A city built on a hill cannot be hid.”**
 - If your light reveals the true reality about it, *you*, like a city on a hill, *will be noticed* for shedding that light. So let your good works cause others to glorify God.

Matthew 5:13-16

Sermon on the Mount

Outline

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Matthew 5:17-48

Sermon on the Mount

A Greater Righteousness

- In the Hebrew scriptures, God declares, “You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God with which I am charging you.” (Deuteronomy 4:2 NRSV).
- Jesus confirms this: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For 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.” (Matthew 5:17-18 NRSV)

Matthew 5:17-48

Sermon on the Mount

A Greater Righteousness

- Jesus now describes how in the new fulfillment of the law, the follower of Jesus is called to a greater righteousness (= doing what is pleasing to God).

Matthew 5:17-48

Sermon on the Mount

A Greater Righteousness

- Two series:
 - In the first series (5:17-32), which begins with **“You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times...”** (5:21), Jesus deals with laws from Exodus and Deuteronomy:
 - Murder (Exodus 20:13, Deuteronomy 5:17)
 - Adultery (Exodus 20:14, Deuteronomy 5:18)
 - Divorce (Deuteronomy 24:1)

Matthew 5:17-32

Sermon on the Mount

A Greater Righteousness

- Two series:
 - In the second series (5:33-48), which begins with **“Again you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times...”** (5:21), Jesus deals with laws from Leviticus:
 - Oaths (Leviticus 19:12)
 - Retaliation (Leviticus 24:20)
 - Love of Enemies (Leviticus 19:18)

Matthew 5:33-48

Sermon on the Mount

A Greater Righteousness

- Jesus radicalizes many of the Old Testament laws, demanding
 - not merely a change in exterior actions, but
 - a change in the attitude and disposition of one's heart,
 - a change which must ultimately be rooted in a love of the Other.
- Furthermore, the scope of our love must imitates God's, and include all those to whom God gives sunlight and rainfall (5:45)

Matthew 5:17-48

Sermon on the Mount

A Greater Righteousness

- **Murder and Anger (5:21-26)**
 - Jesus condemns not only murder, but the anger seething in the heart that can lead to murder
 - He also condemns acts that can incite anger in another, such as insults and name-calling.
 - The underlying ethic is love of the other person. The approach to God is through our neighbor, and a sacrifice to God is meaningless if we are not first reconciled with our neighbor.

Matthew 5:21-26

Sermon on the Mount

A Greater Righteousness

■ Adultery (5:27-30)

- *Background*: defined in the Old Testament (Exodus 20:14, Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 22:22-27) as intercourse with a woman married or betrothed to another Israelite.
 - Adultery was the violation of the marriage of another Israelite male.
 - Double standard: unconditional fidelity was required of the wife (Gen 38:24-26)

Matthew 5:27-30

Sermon on the Mount

A Greater Righteousness

- **Adultery (5:27-30)**
 - Jesus redefined adultery as looking at another woman as a sexual object rather than as a person (that is, “with lust”).
 - Adultery is a sin against the dignity of the woman.

Matthew 5:27-30

Sermon on the Mount

A Greater Righteousness

■ Divorce (5:31-32)

■ *Background:*

- Jewish men in Jesus' day felt they had an inalienable right to put away their wives.
- There was controversy over:
 - the “official” permissible grounds for divorce.
 - when the *ketuba* (= money pledged to her if she were divorced) had to be paid.
- The divorced wife could then become the wife of any other man; the bill of divorce read “Behold thou art permitted to any man.”

Matthew 5:31-32

Sermon on the Mount

A Greater Righteousness

■ Divorce (5:31-32)

- Jesus declared that there was *no* action a husband could take to sunder the marriage relationship in the eyes of God.
 - Therefore, a man who divorces his wife causes “**her to commit adultery** [when she remarries]; **and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.** (5:32 NRSV)
- This declaration would have absolutely stunned a first century audience.

Matthew 5:31-32

Sermon on the Mount

A Greater Righteousness

- **Divorce (5:31-32)**
 - “The Exception Clause:” Only Matthew includes an exception clause in Jesus declaration against divorce: **“except on the ground of *porneia*”**
 - *porneia*: exact meaning here unclear. Might refer to:
 - Adultery. In Jewish tradition, and in the Greco-Roman world, a man who did not divorce his wife if she was caught in adultery was himself guilty of condoning adultery.
 - A marriage within a forbidden degree of kinship.

Matthew 5:31-32

Next Session:

Teaching, Healing, and Calling the Lost Sheep:

**The Sermon on the Mount: Magisterial
Teaching, A Charter for Discipleship
(*part 2: 5:33—8:1*)**

Sermon on the Mount

Outline: *Next Session*

- An Outline of the Sermon on the Mount:
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Matthew 5:17-48