

Encountering Christ in the Gospel of Matthew

January 27-Feb 2 - Week 5, Matthew 1-7

(Ch. 1) The intended audience of Matthew's Gospel was to Jewish people throughout the Mediterranean region. How does beginning with an extensive Jewish genealogy establish the legitimacy of Jesus as a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and King David?

Why do you think Matthew included Gentiles and women in his genealogy?

(Ch. 1 & 2) I imagine that Jesus' birth narrative and visit from the magi is a familiar one. Is there anything that surprised you or that you learned in reading it in its entirety & within the context of Matthew's Gospel?

Throughout Matthew's Gospel, the author embeds quotations from the Old Testament within his narrative. Considering this was written to a Jewish audience, why do you think he does this? Is it effective?

How does the extensive use of the Old Testament within Matthew connect with Jesus saying in Matthew 5:17: "*Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill?*"

Matthew 5:1-12 is known as the Beatitudes. Most translate these verses as beginning with the word "Blessed" or "Happy." A mentor of mine, Earl Palmer, translates this word as "you are on the right road when..." How does substituting "you are on the right road when..." for "Blessed" or "Happy" change your understanding for what Jesus is teaching? Which word/translation works best for you?

(Matthew 5-7) Most of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount is His personal interpretation on following the 10 Commandments. What do you think about how Jesus reinterprets commandments connected to murder, adultery, bearing false witness, and not seeking revenge against those who've wronged you?

(Matthew 5-7) Do you think Jesus actually intends for us to follow these teachings from the Sermon on the Mount? Is it possible to follow such a high standard? If not, why should we even bother?