

## OPENING PRAYER

Proper 28<sup>1</sup>

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written  
for our learning:  
Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn,  
and inwardly digest them,  
that we may embrace and ever hold fast  
the blessed hope of everlasting life,  
which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ;  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## MATTHEW 22<sup>2</sup>

### The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

22 Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: 2 “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. 3 He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. 4 Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ 5 But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, 6 while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. 7 The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. 8 Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. 9 Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ 10 Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad, so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

11 “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, 12 and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ 14 For many are called, but few are chosen.”

### The Question about Paying Taxes

15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. 16 So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality. 17 Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” 18 But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? 19 Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. 20 Then he said to them, “Whose head is this and whose title?” 21 They answered, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.” 22 When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

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<sup>1</sup> Episcopal Book of Common Prayer pp.236

<sup>2</sup> All Bible quotations and footnotes are from Biblegateway.com, New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVUE)  
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### The Question about the Resurrection

23 The same day some Sadducees came to him saying there is no resurrection,[a] and they asked him a question: 24 “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies childless, his brother shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother.’ 25 Now there were seven brothers among us; the first married and died childless, leaving the widow to his brother. 26 The second did the same, so also the third, down to the seventh. 27 Last of all, the woman herself died. 28 In the resurrection, then, whose wife of the seven will she be? For all of them had married her.”

29 Jesus answered them, “You are wrong because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection people neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels of God[b] in heaven. 31 And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, 32 ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is God not of the dead but of the living.” 33 And when the crowds heard it, they were astounded at his teaching.

### The Greatest Commandment

34 When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, 35 and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. 36 “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” 37 He said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the greatest and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

### The Question about David’s Son

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: 42 “What do you think of the Messiah?[c] Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” 43 He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit[d] calls him Lord, saying,

44 ‘The Lord said to my Lord,  
“Sit at my right hand,  
until I put your enemies under your feet” ’?

45 “If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?” 46 No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

### Footnotes

22.23 Other ancient authorities (manuscripts) read *who say that there is no resurrection*

22.30 Other ancient authorities (manuscripts) *lack of God*

22.42 Or *Christ*

22.43 Gk *in spirit*

## GOSPEL COMPARISON<sup>3</sup>

Pericope <sup>4</sup>	Mark	Matthew	Luke	John
The Parable of the Great Wedding Dinner		22:1-14	14:15-24	
On Paying Tribute to Caesar	12:13-17	22:15-22	20:20-26	
The Question about the Resurrection	12:18-27	22:23-33	20:27-40	
The Great Commandment	12:28-34	22:34-40	10:25-28	
The Question about David's Son	12:35-37a	22:41-46	20:41-44	

## PERSPECTIVE

Chapters 21-22 can be seen as a unit: they open with cries of “Son of David” and close with a Jesus-led inquiry into the nature of the Son of David and the Messiah.

### 22:1-14 The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

From Source Q. Not in Mark or John’s Gospels.

22:1-14 carries forward two main points from the previous two parables: 1) the polemic against the Jewish leaders; and 2) the theme of the kingdom passing from the people of Israel to a non-ethnic entity with a universal mission. 22:11-14 adds something new – it turns the attention from outsiders to insiders, from opponents to the church.<sup>5</sup>

v. 1-10 are an allegory, much influenced by 21:33-41. The King stands for God; his son is Jesus; the wedding banquet represents an eschatological banquet – i.e. at the end times.<sup>6</sup> Unique to Matthew and Luke, from Q, it is another instance of rejection by the Jewish leaders. The once independent parable about a man without a wedding garment, added to the ending, deals with a reality that Matthew knows well: Into the church have been brought the bad and the good, so that those who have accepted the call have to face final judgement.<sup>7</sup>

Matthew’s pastoral concern is that he is aware of the criticism of others as well as the doctrine of election. Both are fraught with moral peril. Being critical implies superiority which breeds complacency. And feeling one is part of the elect also breeds superiority and separation. Moral instruction contains an element of censure, what is accepted and what is not in human behavior. And election is a central theme of Judaism. The two traits or behaviors breed illusions in the member who has them.<sup>8</sup>

Matthew wants Christians readers to read the text and ask if they are the man without the appropriate garments. Whether they are among the “many” despite profession to being among “the few”. God’s judgement comes upon all including those in the ecclesia.<sup>9</sup>

### 22:15-22 The Question about Paying Taxes

The story is about the much-hated Roman census tax, a tax on agricultural yield and personal property collected by tax farmers through the use of an annual census/registration. The Jewish authorities helped farm/raise this tax locally and it was much hated by the poor and religious alike.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Source: <http://www.gospelparallels.com/>

<sup>4</sup> An extract from a text, especially a passage from the Bible, “a book of pericopes”

<sup>5</sup> Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume II Chapters VIII-XVIII*, The International Critical Commentary pp. 192-257

<sup>6</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

<sup>7</sup> Brown, Raymond E., S.S., *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 196-7

<sup>8</sup> Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume II Chapters VIII-XVIII*, The International Critical Commentary pp. 192-257

<sup>9</sup> Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume II Chapters VIII-XVIII*, The International Critical Commentary pp. 192-257

<sup>10</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

The story highlights the hypocrisy of Jesus opponents who are carrying a Roman coin inside the Temple. Jesus traps the Herodians and Pharisees who asked the question. Jesus' words distance him from those who oppose Rome. The inclusion of giving to God what is his relativizes the discussion of the Roman state obligation. This is not a principle of loyal submission to the state. Implied is a reservation regarding the state, and the lack of reservation as regards God.<sup>11</sup>

While obedience to God can coexist with doing what the state requires, obligation to God overshadows obligation to the state, So there is no simple, straight forward rule but the imperative to weigh the demands of two unequal authorities. Obligations to both can be met (Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:17). In the case where there is conflict between the two, allegiance to God takes priority. It can be seen as a curb on state power though it is also not a call for a theocratic state.<sup>12</sup>

Note: Matthew presents two seemingly contradictory teachings:

- "Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." (22:21)
- "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." (28:18)

Jesus seems to navigate away from direct confrontation with the Roman Authorities, while continuing to assert that obedience to God comes first.

Whether one considers Jesus' answer to his opponents to be clever or profound or both, the performance is impressive and unforgettable. Jesus avoids a well-conceived trap, but also communicates his own teaching in the answer. In very few words, he preserves the message of the Sermon on the Mount. One cannot read the passage without admiring Jesus' ability as a teacher and a debater.<sup>13</sup>

Matthew's immediate readers, post-70s CE communities, must have read 22:15-22 in the context of the Jewish-Roman War and its outcome. Unlike those who rebelled against Rome, Jesus did not advise revolution against the state. Despite the fact, that as the passion predictions foretold, he expected the Romans to put him to death. Instead 22:15-22 continues a polemic against the Jewish leaders.<sup>14</sup>

### **22:23-33 The Question about the Resurrection**

The Sadducees are asking an academic question about a theological issue: how does resurrection work? The question is divided into three parts: the citation of Levirate law<sup>15</sup> (22:24); the story of the woman and seven brothers (22:25-27); and the query on how the Levirate law bears on the story if the dead are raised(22:28).<sup>16</sup> They ask about resurrection even though they do not believe in it. Jesus without quoting scriptures demonstrates in this passage his own harmony with the Torah and his ability to interpret the Torah.<sup>17</sup>

The Sadducee's question assumes that polyandry, where a woman has more than one husband, is unacceptable and implies that resurrection is foreign to the Pentateuch. Jesus rejects their argument and assumptions as the product of culpable ignorance and bad theology. The Sadducees reject the resurrection because they imagine the eschatological future materialistically. Jesus' view is not materialistic. He sees the God of Israel as omnipotent with the ability to transform saints.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

<sup>12</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

<sup>13</sup> Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume II Chapters VIII-XVIII*, The International Critical Commentary pp. 192-257

<sup>14</sup> Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume II Chapters VIII-XVIII*, The International Critical Commentary pp. 192-257

<sup>15</sup> Levirate law: Levirate marriage became part of the Law in Deuteronomy 25:5-6. 5 "When brothers reside together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her, taking her in marriage and performing the duty of a husband's brother to her, 6 and the firstborn whom she bears shall succeed to the name of the deceased brother, so that his name may not be blotted out of Israel."

<sup>16</sup> Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume II Chapters VIII-XVIII*, The International Critical Commentary pp. 192-257

<sup>17</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

<sup>18</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

“In the resurrection” means not “at the resurrection” but in the resurrection condition of the just. If in general people will be like angels, then the marital bond will be transcended, for angels (who are immortal) live without marriage (who are generally portrayed as male in the OT, and outside of marriage not because they are sexless or androgynous, but because they refrain.<sup>19</sup>

22:31 moves from the manner of the resurrection to the fact. Jesus does not cite Daniel 12:1-3<sup>20</sup> but a Pentateuchal text. He accordingly meets the Sadducees on their own ground because they only recognize the authority of Moses rather than the later prophets. Jesus’ point seems to be God does not say, “I was the God of Abraham...” he says, “I *am* the God of Abraham”. So even though Abraham and the others are dead at the time of God’s announcement they have not ceased to be.<sup>21</sup>

### Resurrection/Raised

The most common language in Matthew regarding what will happen to Jesus after he has died and been buried is the word “raised” followed by the word “resurrection”. Matthew prepares the reader for Jesus being raised and gives you many opportunities to contemplate the event before it occurs. Chapter 22 is then the longest discussion of resurrection, explicitly in the Gospel.

Raised (Primarily private teachings to the disciples):

- “the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them.” (11:5)
- and he said to his servants, “This is John the Baptist; he has been raised from the dead, and for this reason these powers are at work in him.” (14:2)
- From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised. (16:21)
- As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, “Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.” (17:9)
- “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands, 23 and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised.” (17:22-23)
- 18 “Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death; 19 then they will hand him over to the gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and on the third day he will be raised.” (20:18-20)
- “But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.” (26:32)
- The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. (27:52)
- Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise, his disciples may go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has been raised from the dead,’ and the last deception would be worse than the first.” (27:64)
- He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.” (28:6)
- Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.” (28:7)

Resurrection:

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<sup>19</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

<sup>20</sup> Dan 12:1-3 “12 “At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. 2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth[a] shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky,[b] and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

Footnotes

12.2 Or *the land of dust*

12.3 Or *dome*

<sup>21</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

- 23 The same day some Sadducees came to him saying there is no resurrection,[a] and they asked him a question... 30 For in the resurrection people neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels of God[b] in heaven. 31 And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, 32 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is God not of the dead but of the living." 33 And when the crowds heard it, they were astounded at his teaching. (22:23, 30-32)

Post-resurrection stories:

- After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. (27:53)
- Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee; there they will see me." (28:9-10)
- Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted. (28:16-17)

The key attributes of resurrection appear to be:

- Raised by God
- Physical and spiritual presence
- Will not die again (distinction with resuscitation)
- Granted authority and power

Thus the good news of Christianity that Jesus died and was raised on the third day by God is echoed repeatedly in Matthew. All in preparation for Chapter 28 and the resurrection stories.

### **22:34-40 The Greatest Commandment**

Jesus responds to the Pharisee's question of what the greatest commandment is, he recapitulates the themes of his own ministry and integrates the Law and the prophets. In essence, he fuses two traditional Jewish summaries: the commandments to love God (part of the Shema, Judaism's closest thing to a creed), and to love your neighbor.<sup>22</sup> But Matthew does not clarify how the two commandments to love relate to one another. Evagaris Ponticus argued that love of neighbor is love of God because it is love of the image of God in others. This may be the closest to Matthew's own view of love of God and people.

In Matthew 25:31-46<sup>23</sup> Jesus the functional presence of God (1:23; 18:20; 28:20) is the direct recipient of acts of love done to others. "As you did it to one of the least of these..." Service of neighbors is service of Christ, which means service of God. Chrysostom wrote "to love God is to love your neighbor". Matthew would have agreed.<sup>24</sup>

Lev 19:18 is quoted three times in Matthew (5:43; 19:19; 22:39) more than any other OT text. The first citation expands the meaning of neighbor to make it universal and even the enemy is loved. The second citation reveals Lev 19:18's status as a fundamental summary of the more demands of the Decalogue.

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<sup>22</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

<sup>23</sup> Matthew 25:31-46 "31 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, 33 and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. 34 Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, 35 for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' 37 Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? 38 And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? 39 And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' 40 And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.' 41 Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You who are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, 42 for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' 44 Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?' 45 Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life."

<sup>24</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

The third brings the love of neighbor into intimate connection with the commandment to love God and thus in Matthean fashion religion and ethics are fused.<sup>25</sup>

22:34-40 recalls the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus teaches what is demanded in a relationship with God and clarifies what is required in a relationship with one's neighbors. In the latter Jesus teaches about the Torah and then about religious topics (5:17-48; 6:1-18). Religious duties are to be performed not for human approval but grow out of the intimate relationship with God the Father, and out of love and devotion to God. The neighbor is loved and treated as one loves and treats oneself. All of which is to say the Sermon on the Mount and 22:34-40 sum up the law and the prophets in similar fashion.<sup>26</sup>

Although the two commandments to love God with one's entire being and to love neighbor as oneself are already known in the OT (Deut 6:5 and Lev 19:18<sup>27</sup>), it is in the later Jewish tradition—The Testaments of the Patriarchs—that they are joined for the first time (T. Dan 5:3; T. Iss 5:2, 7:6).<sup>28</sup> Perhaps that is why Luke does not feel compelled to credit Jesus for the union (#3). However, unique to the SG (#s 4 & 5) is identifying them as fundamental to God's written revelation (Matt 22:40), superior to the cultus (Mark 12:33),<sup>29</sup> and vital—via love in action—to eternal life (Luke 10:28).<sup>30</sup>

### 22:41-46 The Question about David's Son

Jesus now asks the Pharisees questions about Christology. 22:42 "What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?" i.e. Whose son is the Messiah? The Pharisee's answer David's, and Jesus answer is clear from the narrative, God's. Jesus answer relies on two assumptions: 1) in accordance with Jewish tradition David composed Psalm 110; and 2) Psalm 110 is messianic (23:39). It follows that David wrote about the Lord (i.e. God) speaking to my Lord and that the latter must be the messianic Son of David (22:42). Which would appear to be a contradiction. How can one standing at the right hand of God and addressed as Lord be David's son? A son may address his father as Lord, but a father does not speak of a son as Lord.<sup>31</sup>

The Pharisees do not know the answer. The Matthean Christian knows the answer to the riddle because they know that Jesus is both the Messiah, of the lineage of David, he is also the Son of God, an exalted figure that sits at God's right hand and rules. Jesus is both a descendent of David and one whose destiny surpasses that of his forbear.<sup>32</sup>

Jesus is probing the Pharisees on the question of who and what is the Messiah? Whose son is the messiah? David's or? It must be understood that we cannot discern with any degree of confidence what Jesus, if he did quote Psalm 110:1, might have meant by his quotation. Interpretations often make two assumptions: David composed Psalm 110; and Psalm 110 is messianic.<sup>33</sup>

If both assumptions are true, then Jesus point is who is the Lord that David is mentioning who speaks to God on David's behalf? How can that figure stand at the right hand of God and be addressed as Lord and be subordinate to David? Jesus' answer unstated, and the Christian church answer stated, is that Jesus is the messiah, and he is both of the lineage of David and conceived from God and thus superior to David.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

<sup>26</sup> Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume II Chapters VIII-XVIII*, The International Critical Commentary pp. 192-257

<sup>27</sup> Often missed is that God also commands Israelites to love the stranger as oneself, their having experienced being strangers in Egypt (Lev 19:33-34).

<sup>28</sup> These are tabulated and discussed in Lemcio, *Travels With St. Mark*, 38-39. For a study of the synoptic parallels within the fuller context of Second Temple Judaism, see Lesson 28 and Lemcio in Wall and Lemcio, *New Testament as Canon*, 70-74. I suggest in the latter that the SG at this point bear a striking resemblance to the "Three Pillars of Judaism" that developed after the Second Temple's destruction, with the cessation of the sacrificial system: the Study of Scripture, Prayer, and Giving to the Poor.

<sup>29</sup> Although Matthew twice (9:13, 12:7) cites Hos 6:6 ("I desire mercy, not sacrifice."), he is not as thoroughgoing as Mark in critiquing cultic practice, personnel, and place (11:16-17 and 14:58).

<sup>30</sup> For a fuller treatment of each emphasis, see Lemcio, "Gospels and Canonical Criticism," 119-21 (reprinted in Wall and Lemcio, *New Testament as Canon*, 41-47).

<sup>31</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

<sup>32</sup> Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 872-3

<sup>33</sup> Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume II Chapters VIII-XVIII*, The International Critical Commentary pp. 192-257

<sup>34</sup> Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume II Chapters VIII-XVIII*, The International Critical Commentary pp. 192-257

## REFLECTIONS

### **Doctrine of election**

- Do we feel critical, superior, or separate from others because of our faith?
- In the “The Parable of the Wedding Banquet” (22:1-14 ) the replacement of the Jewish chosen by the followers of Jesus is then disrupted by some of those followers being rejected.

### **God and Caesars**

- No one can serve two masters (6:24).
- Obedience to God can coexist with doing what the state requires, though obligation to God overshadows obligation to the state, So there is no simple, straight forward rule but the imperative to weigh the demands of two unequal authorities.

### **Raised/Resurrection**

- Matthew has made sure we are forewarned of Jesus’ death and being raised by God.
- Are we prepared? Do we understand and believe in the resurrection?

### **Love God and your Neighbor**

- How does love of God impel us to love our neighbor?

### **Jesus Identity**

- Jesus is the messiah, and he is both of the lineage of David and incarnate from God.
- How does this relate to the Transfiguration, Baptism and Nativity stories?
- Who and what is Jesus in Matthew’s gospel?



## CLOSING PRAYER

We thank you, heavenly Father,  
for the witness of your apostle and evangelist,  
Matthew, to the Gospel of Beatitude and Grace  
which you have given us in your Son, our Savior;  
and we pray that, after his example,  
we may with ready wills and hearts obey  
the calling of our Lord to follow him;  
through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you  
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

*The Rev. Zoila Schoenbrun*

## SLOW RELIGION: GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW



*The Inspiration of St. Matthew, Caravaggio, 1602*

Slow Religion, The Gospel According to Matthew is a lay person-led adult education weekly class for Christians and seekers. Slow Religion uses a literary and historical approach to the ancient texts to identify and apply insights from the Gospel to today's world.

Matthew's gospel is worth studying because the author attempts to uphold Jesus' Jewish past, with Jesus ministry, death, and resurrection, in the context of the 1st Century CE Jesus movement and early church, and in a hostile Hellenistic and Jewish world.

21st Century readers recognize Matthew as the source of many of the best-known stories and sayings of Jesus as well as a social philosophy that many non-Christians believe in. Famous for its Sermon on the Mount, The Beatitudes, and other teachings, Matthew is often called the most Jewish of the Gospels, while also contributing with the Gospel of John to antisemitism.

The class is created and led by Joe Jennings and advisors include: the Rev. Zoila Schoenbrun, St. Stephens Episcopal Church, Belvedere, CA; the Rev. Br. Richard Edward Helmer, Episcopal Church of our Saviour, Mill Valley, CA; the Rev. Heather Wenrick, the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Seattle; and the Father Vincent Pizzuto, PhD., vicar at St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Inverness CA and Full Professor at the (Jesuit) University of San Francisco, New Testament and Christian Mysticism, in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies.

Prior Slow Religion Classes include the Gospel of According to Mark (2021-22), the Foundations of Christian Faith (2020-21), the Holy Spirit (2020), the Gospel According to John (2019-20), and Paul's Letter to the Romans (2017-8).

For more information, to see class videos, our bibliography or to join the Slow Religion mailing list go to: [www.slowreligion.com](http://www.slowreligion.com)