

OPENING PRAYER

Proper 28¹

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 23

Jesus Denounces Scribes and Pharisees

23 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 2 “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’s seat; 3 therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it, but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. 4 They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear,[a] and lay them on the shoulders of others, but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. 5 They do all their deeds to be seen by others, for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. 6 They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues 7 and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to have people call them rabbi. 8 But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers and sisters. 9 And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father, the one in heaven. 10 Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah.[b] 11 The greatest among you will be your servant. 12 All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

13 “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in you stop them.[c] 15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell[d] as yourselves.

16 “Woe to you, blind guides who say, ‘Whoever swears by the sanctuary is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound by the oath.’ 17 You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the sanctuary that has made the gold sacred? 18 And you say, ‘Whoever swears by the altar is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gift that is on the altar is bound by the oath.’ 19 How blind you are! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? 20 So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it, 21 and whoever swears by the sanctuary swears by it and by the one who dwells in it, 22 and whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by the one who is seated upon it.

23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others. 24 You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

25 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26 You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and of the plate,[e] so that the outside also may become clean.

¹ Episcopal Book of Common Prayer pp.236

27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful but inside are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of uncleanness. 28 So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

29 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous, 30 and you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ 31 Thus you testify against yourselves that you are descendants of those who murdered the prophets. 32 Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors. 33 You snakes, you brood of vipers! How can you escape the judgment of hell?[f] 34 For this reason I send you prophets, sages, and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town, 35 so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. 36 Truly I tell you, all this will come upon this generation.

The Lament over Jerusalem

37 “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! 38 See, your house is left to you, desolate.[g] 39 For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’ ”

Footnotes

23.4 Other ancient authorities (manuscripts) lack *hard to bear*

23.10 Or *the Christ*

23.13 Other authorities (manuscripts) add 23.14 here (or after 23.12): *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, and for the sake of appearance you make long prayers; therefore you will receive the greater condemnation*

23.15 Gk *Gehenna*

23.26 Other ancient authorities (manuscripts) lack *and of the plate*

23.33 Gk *Gehenna*

23.38 Other ancient authorities (manuscripts) lack *desolate*

GOSPEL COMPARISON²

Pericope ³	Mark	Matthew	Luke	John
Woe to the Scribes and Pharisees	12:37b-40	23:1-36	20:45-47	
Jesus' Lament over Jerusalem		23:37-39	13:34-35	

² Source: <http://www.gospelparallels.com/>

³ An extract from a text, especially a passage from the Bible, "a book of pericopes"

PERSPECTIVE

Note: Jesus in Jerusalem in his life time is threatened by the chief priests and the Sadducees/Sanhedrin. They are the people who will have him arrested and executed in a few short days. This chapter is an attack on the Pharisees and scribes who are the people Matthew competes with for the direction of Judaism after the fall of the Temple and Jerusalem in 70 CE. Matthew is the only gospel with this long and detailed an attack on the Pharisees and scribes. Look at the chart on pp. 4 to see how much of the material in this chapter is shared with Mark and Luke, and how much is unique to Matthew.

It also may be that the criticism of the Pharisees and Scribes, and the lament for Jerusalem is an indictment of the past, present in terms of Jesus' times and the future in terms of Matthew's times, for how the elites and people respond to prophets. This is no longer teaching it is an exhortation or prophetic pronouncement on the leadership and the people.

The impetus for constructing 23:1-39 is Mark 12:38-40, which follows the question of David's son and offers criticism of the scribes. Upon these three verses of Mark, Matthew built a lengthy monologue addressing the disciples and the crowds.⁴ The chapter begins with the theme of hypocrisy and ends with the accusation of murder. Hence things go from bad to worse.⁵

There is nothing comparable to the sustained denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees in any of the other Gospels. Both Mark and Luke have short attacks, but Matthew has a sustained denunciation.⁶

The essence of Jesus critique is that the Pharisee's system put its emphasis on rules and regulations which sought the appearance of righteousness when the actual behavior of some of the Pharisees did not match up.⁷

Chapter 23 has three parts:

- 1) vv 1-12 Jesus addresses the crowds and his disciples warning them about the Jewish leaders;
- 2) vv: 13-34 Jesus addresses his opponents directly; and
- 3) vv:34-39 Jesus closes with an address to Jerusalem.

In tonality the language of Chapter 23 is similar to language used by other claimants to the Greco-Roman philosophical tradition against their oppositions. Most of Matthew's charges against the scribes and Pharisees repeat charges you can find elsewhere in the OT. His language is not a break with Judaism, but a call to return to Judaism in Jesus teachings.⁸

Chapter 23 does not criticize isolated beliefs or activities, rather it amounts to a rejection of Pharisee-ism itself. Rather than attacking them for not believing in Jesus, the chapter attacks them using their own standards. The text presupposes that the Pharisees actually know better and that they are hypocrites⁹ in the true sense of the word. Matthew's Jesus is arguing as a Jew with other Jews; the leaders have been unfaithful to their own shared tradition.¹⁰

The seven woes can be seen as both a criticism of Jewish leaders in Jesus time and of synagogue leaders in Matthew's time. Additionally, Christian today should pay attention because the woes can also apply to church leadership today.¹¹

⁴ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.266

⁵ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.269

⁶ Morris, Leon, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary, The Gospel According to Matthew*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992, p. 568

⁷ Morris, Leon, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary, The Gospel According to Matthew*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992, p. 570

⁸ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.264-325

⁹ Merriam Webster: *hypocrisy*, relating to *hypocrites*, borrowed from Greek *hypókrisis* "playing a part on the stage, pretending to be something one is not,"

¹⁰ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., *Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary*, pp. 875-876

¹¹ Brown, Raymond E., S.S., *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 197-198

Chapter 23 serves as a bridge to the last great discourse in Matthew. The denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees is an extraordinary Matthean construction. The hostility manifested by the authorities in their questions designed to trap Jesus in chapter 22 is now returned with Jesus critique and attack on them.¹²

23:1-36 Jesus Denounces Scribes and Pharisees

Matthew has the most developed critique of the Scribes and Pharisees in the Synoptic Gospels. Mark and Luke provide a short condemnation, while Matthew provides an in-depth attack and equates them with being hypocrites.

Mark 12:37b-40	Matthew 23:1-36	Luke 20:45-47
<p>38 As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces 39 and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! 40 They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."</p>	<p>23 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 2 "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses's seat; 3 therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it, but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. 4 They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear,[a] and lay them on the shoulders of others, but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. 5 They do all their deeds to be seen by others, for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. 6 They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues 7 and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to have people call them rabbi.</p>	<p>45 In the hearing of all the people he said to the disciples, 46 "Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes and who love respectful greetings in the marketplaces and the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets. 47 They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."</p>
	<p>8 But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers and sisters. 9 And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father, the one in heaven. 10 Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah.[b] 11 The greatest among you will be your servant. 12 All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.</p>	
	<p>13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in you stop them.[c] 15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell[d] as yourselves.</p>	
	<p>16 "Woe to you, blind guides who say, 'Whoever swears by the sanctuary is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound by the oath.' 17 You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the sanctuary that has made the gold sacred? 18 And you say, 'Whoever swears by the altar is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gift that is on the altar is bound by the oath.' 19 How blind you are! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that</p>	

¹² Brown, Raymond E., S.S., An Introduction to the New Testament, pp. 197-198

	<p>makes the gift sacred? 20 So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it, 21 and whoever swears by the sanctuary swears by it and by the one who dwells in it, 22 and whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by the one who is seated upon it.</p>	
	<p>23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others. 24 You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!</p>	
	<p>25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26 You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and of the plate,[e] so that the outside also may become clean.</p>	
	<p>27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful but inside are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of uncleanness. 28 So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.</p>	
	<p>29 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous, 30 and you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' 31 Thus you testify against yourselves that you are descendants of those who murdered the prophets. 32 Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors. 33 You snakes, you brood of vipers! How can you escape the judgment of hell?[f] 34 For this reason I send you prophets, sages, and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town, 35 so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. 36 Truly I tell you, all this will come upon this generation.</p>	

23:1-12 verses condemn hypocrisy (v. 3), religious show (vv. 4-6), and self-exaltation (v. 7). They commend obedience to truth (v. 3), equality (v. 8), and humility (vv. 11-12). The same vices and virtues were assailed and praised in the Sermon on the Mount and Chapter 18.¹³

"*Moses seat*" is ambiguous, it may be a literal chair for synagogue authorities, or be a metaphor for teaching authority. In any case only here are the Jewish leaders presented in a positive light, they should

¹³ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876

be obeyed. 23:3 indicts the scribes and Pharisees and calls attention to the fact that the behavior condemns these leaders because they know better.¹⁴

23:1-12 repeats themes from the Sermon on the Mount and falls into two parts:

1. (23:1-7) a polemical portrait of vanity;
2. and (23:8-12) a community rule on humility – the antithetical behavior. Vv. 3 condemns hypocrisy, vv. 4-6 religious show, and vv. 7 self-exaltation. It commends obedience to the truth (v. 3), mutuality (v. 8) and humility (vv. 11-12). What distinguishes the teaching is the concentration on the vices of the Pharisees and Scribes, and the eschewing of titles. It may be explained by the situation facing Matthew's community. His community may have thought of itself as competing with the rabbinic movement which as an heir of the Pharisees. It may have also been a push back from the emerging Christian movement's hierarchical structure.¹⁵ 23:8-12 counsels not to have titles and hierarchies because they lead to self-glorification. Christians are to shun titles.¹⁶

21:13-33 The scribes and Pharisees are representatives of the emerging rabbinic class in post-Easter, post-Destruction of the Temple 1st Century CE Judaism. They are depicted as hopelessly corrupt. The upshot is edification and self-definition, for the debasement of the church's antagonists both indirectly vindicates the faithful and exhibits, through counter examples, what the church should not be.¹⁷

The woes, which commence with halakic¹⁸ disagreements, and culminate in the murder of God's messengers, mirror the plot of the whole gospel, in which religious disputes lead to Jesus' murder by the authorities. Chapter 23 is not new information. It is the climax of themes running throughout the gospel. What is new is their concentration in one chapter and the ferocity of Matthew's attack.¹⁹

The heated rhetoric of 23:13 reveal that the anger was not from a distant time but contemporary to Matthew's times. It reflects the early Jewish-Christian movement's estrangement from the mother Jewish community.²⁰

Many scholars believe that Matthew put on Jesus lips the condemnations he heard in the battle over the future of Judaism taking place in the synagogues after the fall of the Temple between the Pharisees, who would become the rabbinic movement, and the Jewish-Christian sect that followed Jesus.²¹

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! (21:13)

The first woe (v. 13) prefaces the series as a sort of summary: the scribes and the Pharisees, despite their religious efforts, neither enter the kingdom, nor allow others to.²²

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! (21:14-15)

The second woe (v. 14) indicts the scribes and Pharisees not because they are missionaries, but because their missionary efforts that results in others like themselves has tragic effects. The problem is conversion to Judaism without the Messiah.²³

“Woe to you, blind guides” (21:16-22)

The third woe (v. 16-22) turns to a specific halakah, argues first against the distinction between binding and non-binding oaths and second asserts that all oaths are binding because all oaths relate to God. In Matthew 5:33-37 oaths are attacked. Here their use is assumed. Common to both passages is the idea

¹⁴ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876

¹⁵ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.264-325

¹⁶ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876

¹⁷ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876

¹⁸ Merriam Webster: *halakic*, relating to *halakah*, the body of Jewish oral laws supplementing the scriptural law and forming especially the legal part of the Talmud

¹⁹ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876

²⁰ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.264-325

²¹ Morris, Leon, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary, The Gospel According to Matthew*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992, p. 570

²² Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876

²³ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876

that to swear to one thing is to swear by another. Both assert to swear by heaven is to swear by God's throne.²⁴

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! (21:23-24)

The fourth woe (vv. 23-24) condemns not tithing but a lack of justice, mercy, and faith. The lesser things, however useful or needed, should not eclipse the greater. Straining your wine to avoid ingesting an insect while overlooking the larger things that defile is Jesus' point.²⁵

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! (21:25-26)

The fifth woe (vv. 25-26) adds to the charge that the Pharisees and scribes do the less important thing to the neglect of what is more important. They clean the outside to have a righteous appearance, while leaving the inside impure.²⁶

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! (21:27-28)

The sixth woe (vv. 27-28) likens the scribes and Pharisees to white washed tombs, which they regarded as unclean.²⁷

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! (21:29-36)

The seventh woe (vv. 29-33) is the most sericeous and climatic. V. 33 recalls the words of JohnBap to the Pharisees and Sadducees in Matthew 3:7. Jesus again speaks like JohnBap, and his message is that of his eschatological forerunner. The Pharisees cannot escape the eschatological wrath of God (Rev. 6:15-17). It shows that the ministries of JohnBap and Jesus have not changed the behavior or attitudes of the Pharisees and Sadducees.²⁸

23:34-36 Record Jerusalem and its leaders rejecting prior prophets and murdering them, though the reference to "Zechariah son of Barachiah" is unclear.²⁹

23:37-39 The Lament over Jerusalem

Matthew and Luke's versions come from Q. They are virtually identical. The difference is that Matthew's version follows the expanded polemic against the Pharisees.

Matthew 23:37-39	Luke 13:34-35
37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"	34 Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!
38 See, your house is left to you, desolate.[g] 39 For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'	35 See, your house is left to you.[a] And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when[b] you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.' "

vv. 37-39 temper what has gone before. Jesus has been judgmental but now he expresses regret. The woes are uttered in sadness, the indignation is righteousness. Jesus is the compassionate Son of Matthew 11:28-30 who has made a prophetic judgement mingled with affection. Like Jeremiah, Jesus is a reluctant prophet.³⁰

The chapter ends with an apostrophe to Jerusalem drawn from Q. Jesus has failed to persuade the city. Therefore her house, the Temple, is forsaken and desolate. Jerusalem will not see Jesus again until she says, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."³¹

²⁴ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876
²⁵ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876
²⁶ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876
²⁷ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876
²⁸ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876
²⁹ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876
³⁰ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 875-876
³¹ Brown, Raymond E., S.S., An Introduction to the New Testament, pp. 197-198

There are at least two schools of interpretation: God's definitive rejection of the people and leadership of Israel; and God's rejection of the leadership of Israel and Jerusalem.³² Vv. 37-39 temper vv 1-36, and Jesus goes from judgement to sadness. Jesus appears at the end of the passage as a compassionate figure whose prophetic judgements are mingled with affection.³³

Note: is this a lament or an eschatological prophecy? The Temple will be left desolate, and Jesus will not be seen again until he returns as the Son of Man and is heralded as "coming in the name of the Lord."

³² Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.264-325

³³ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.264-325

REFLECTION

How do we understand in today's context these teachings:

Torah

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses's seat; 3 therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it, but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. (23:2-3)

Matthew is upholding the Torah and denouncing the teachers.

Power vs prophecy

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it!" (23:39)

Why does Jerusalem have a history of rejecting God's messengers?

Coming desolation of Jerusalem

"See, your house is left to you, desolate." (23:38)

Who is condemned to desolation, the leadership, or the people of Israel, or both?

Even in desolation, God is still you

39 For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.' "

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