

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 28²

The Resurrection of Jesus

28 After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

2 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow. 4 For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men.

5 But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he[a] lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead,[b] and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you."

8 So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples. 9 Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. 10 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."

The Report of the Guard

11 While they were going, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests everything that had happened. 12 After the priests[c] had assembled with the elders, they devised a plan to give a large sum of money to the soldiers, 13 telling them, "You must say, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' 14 If this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." 15 So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story is still told among the Judeans to this day.

¹ Episcopal Book of Common Prayer pp.236

² All Bible quotations and footnotes are from Biblegateway.com, New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVUE)
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The Commissioning of the Disciples

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted.

18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 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 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."[d]

Footnotes

- 28.6 Other ancient authorities (manuscripts) read *the Lord*
28.7 Other ancient authorities (manuscripts) lack *from the dead*
28.12 Gk *they*
28.20 Other ancient authorities (manuscripts) add *Amen*

GOSPEL COMPARISON³

Pericopes	Mark	Matthew	Luke	John
The Women at the Tomb	16:1-8	28:1-8	24:1-12	20:1-13
Jesus Appears to the Women	16:9-11	28:9-10	24:10-11	20:14-18
The Report of the Guard		28:11-15		
Jesus Appears to Two on the Way to Emmaus	16:12-13		24:13-35	
Jesus Appears to His Disciples			24:36-43	20:19-23
Jesus Appears to His Disciples (Thomas being Present)				20:24-29
Jesus Appears to the Eleven While They Sit at Table	16:14-18			
Jesus Appears to the Eleven on a Mountain in Galilee		28:16-20		
Jesus Appears to His Disciples by the Sea of Tiberias				21:1-14
The Long Ending of Mark	16:9-20			
The Ending of Luke. Jesus' Last Words and Ascension	16:15, 19		24:44-53	
The Ending of John				20:30-31
Appendix: Jesus at the Sea of Tiberias				21:1-25

Green: common to all four Gospels.
Yellow: unique to Matthew

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

PERSPECTIVE

Each of the four gospels has its own way of telling the story of the resurrection. There are considerable differences between the four. What they have in common is that the event was a complete surprise to Jesus' followers and disciples. Despite Jesus' teaching and prophecies about his death and being raised no one expected it to happen or understood beforehand what he was talking about. The fact that the accounts are different proves two things: they are based on semi-independent sources for their stories; and there was no early movement attempt to come up with a single party line.⁴

Matthew's story of the post-crucifixion/burial is significantly different than other synoptic gospels. There is an earthquake, and an angel descends to roll back the stone for the women to see that the tomb is already empty. The angel's message to the women about Jesus' victory has a different reaction from the message in Mark. The women run to tell the disciples joyful. And Jesus appears to them in person.⁵

At the end of the day no one disagreed that the tomb was empty, and no one could produce the body. These facts lay at the bottom of the story and conflict between believers and non-believers about the resurrection in the 1st Century CE.⁶

The Resurrection of Jesus 28:1-10

Comparing Mark and Matthew⁷

Mark 16:1-8	Matthew 28:1-10
16 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him.	28 After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. Note: 1) Three women in Mark, two women in Matthew; 2) Matthew omits the shopping for spices; and Matthew omits their motivation is to anoint him.
2 And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. 3 They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?"	2 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. Note: Matthew adds an earthquake, an angel descending and the women witnessing the rolling back of the stone
	4 For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. Note: guards only appear in Matthew.
4 When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back.	Note: In Mark the stone is already rolled away, in Matthew the angel does it for the women.
5 As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.	3 His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow. Note: neither the angel nor the women actually enter the tomb in Matthew.
6 But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him.	5 But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he[a] lay.

⁴ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

⁵ Brown, Raymond E., S.S., An Introduction to the New Testament, pp.202-203

⁶ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

⁷ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.659-691

	Note: Matthew omits of Nazareth and add “as he said” as a reference to Jesus prophecies of his death and resurrection.
7 But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.”	7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead,[b] and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.” Note: Matthew adds “He has been raised from the dead”
8 So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.[a]	8 So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples. Note: In Matthew the women are afraid and in great joy and they are running to tell the disciples.
	9 Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. 10 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.” Note: Not found in Mark.

Matthew’s account opens with the appearance of an angel to humans (cf Daniel 10:2-14; 2 Enoch 1:3-10) with eschatological motifs (earthquake, resurrection) (vv. 1-8); this is followed by an appearance of the risen Jesus (vv. 9-10); and a story of how unbelievers treated the facts (vv.11-15).⁸

v. 5 But the angels business is not with the guards, but with the women. Being afraid in the presence of a divine being is normal. But the angel is there to help the women. He recognizes why they are at the tomb.⁹

The women are contrasted with the soldiers: they both gather at the tomb; they both see an angel descending; both feel fear; both tell others what has happened; and both are told by others what they should say. The difference is that women tell the truth to the disciples and the soldiers lie about the disciples. The women come as witnesses to Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection.¹⁰

The earthquake, the movement from heaven to earth, and the resurrection from the tomb make the vindication of Jesus an eschatological event. The resurrection, the full meaning of which only becomes apparent at 28:16-20, makes Jesus himself an illustration of his own teaching. He is, like the prophets before him, wrongly prosecuted because of his loyalty to God, and he gains his reward in heaven. He finds his life after losing it. He is the servant who becomes great, the last who becomes first. The angel’s appearance recalls Jesus appearance in the Transfiguration.¹¹

The angel proclaims the Christian message in terms that recall the primitive confession in 1 Cor 15:3-5¹²:

v. 5 “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he[a] lay.”

3 For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures 4 and that he was buried and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.” (1 Cor 15:3-5)

⁸ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 885-6

⁹ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

¹⁰ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 885-6

¹¹ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.659-691

¹² Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.659-691

v. 6 “He is not here” tells them that their search for Jesus’ body is in vain. The Father has raised the Son just as Jesus told them he would. This is the fate Jesus expected and the followers did not understand. Something wonderful has happened. Jesus has been vindicated by God.¹³

v. 6 The angel interprets the empty tomb, “he has been raised”, and then offers supporting evidence “see the place where he[a] lay.” Jesus has, in the language of 22:30, and in refutation of Sadducee’s belief, entered in “the resurrection” and become “like the angels”. He has experienced the end of history.¹⁴

v. 7 The angel commissions the women to be the first messengers of the good news to the disciples and followers of Jesus. We do not know why God chose the women to hear the message first. We do know that the gospels are consistent on this point.¹⁵

The women are told to tell the disciples two things: one he has been *raised*; and two he goes before them to *Galilee*. Raised is important because it makes it clear the Father raised the Son. Galilee because it points the disciples back to where Jesus ministry began and away from Jerusalem.¹⁶

v.9 The women upon seeing Jesus and hearing him speak, immediately recognize him, and bow before him (in contrast to Luke 24:16 and John 20:14.)¹⁷

Matt uniquely has guards present, and an angel descending and rolling away the stone before the tomb. Matthew concentrates on the fact of the resurrection in his narrative and simply says the women came to see the tomb. (No spices). When they arrived at the tomb, they encountered the descending angel who opens the tomb for them.¹⁸

Jesus has already been *raised*. What the angel is enabling is for the women to see that his body is no longer where it had been laid on Friday evening. Since they had been there Friday, they knew he was dead, where he was buried, and they saw the stone being rolled over the tomb.¹⁹

Matthew compares the angels appearance to looking like *lightening*. It is not easy to understand what Matthew means. The angel made an impression on the guards. “*For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men.*” (28:4)²⁰

vv. 8-10 Unlike in Mark’s gospel where the women flee the tomb in fee and terror, in Matthew they leave also with great joy, and they are running to tell the disciples. Unique to Matthew, the women encounter Jesus together on the way to the disciples. They had been last at the cross, first to the tomb, and now first to meet the risen Jesus. Holding his feet and worshipping him is a symbolic sign that they recognize his kingship. He is more than mortal now, he is divine. Matthew makes clear Jesus is a risen body, not a spirit or ghost, Matthew is not describing a vision. Jesus repeats what the angel had said, Don’t be afraid, go and tell my brothers and sisters (his family in faith) to go to Galilee to see me.²¹

The Report of the Guard 28:11-15

The backstory of the guards being bribed to lie about the tomb and the angel is inserted.²²

Evidently the Matthean community was accustomed to debating with their Jewish counterparts in the synagogue how and why the tomb was empty. It appears that the opponents conceded an empty tomb.

¹³ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

¹⁴ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.659-691

¹⁵ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

¹⁶ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

¹⁷ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.659-691

¹⁸ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

¹⁹ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

²⁰ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

²¹ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

²² Brown, Raymond E., S.S., An Introduction to the New Testament, pp.202-203

What they argued about was why and how it became empty. The opponents assigned Jesus missing body to theft, either by the disciples themselves or by grave robbers.²³

The purpose of this passage is the same as the purpose of 27:62-6 and 28:2-4. It is transparently apologetical. It is here to give Christians tools to argue with non-believing and hostile Jewish and pagan audiences about the resurrection. It also addresses specific arguments Matthew's community has heard.²⁴

The Commissioning of the Disciples 28:16-20

General Comments:

The concluding paragraph is unique to Matthew. He says that Jesus met the disciples in Galilee on a mountaintop. Some worshipped him and some doubted. *Worship* was a natural response to meeting the risen Jesus. But some *doubted* or *hesitated* according to the translation. Why did some doubt or hesitate? Perhaps they were not sure that Jesus really was risen; was this a vision; not a real person? Maybe they had difficulty recognizing him? But we can also ask who has perfect faith? Who has faith without some doubt?²⁵

This final section is almost a compendium of Matthew's theology²⁶: (See Appendix One for detail)

- *Galilee* -- fulfills the prophecies in 26:32 and 28:7 and creates a literary arch with 4:12
- *Mountain* -- recalls the other mountain scenes especially 4:8
- *They worshipped him and some doubted* – foreshadowed by 14:31-33
- *All authority in heaven and earth is given to me*—11:27, Dan 7:13-14
- *Jesus kingship theme* – 1:1
- *Make disciples* – 13:52
- *All nations* – terminates the prohibition in 10:5-6; 15:24
- *Of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit* – is a connection to the baptism 3:13-17
- *Teaching* – recapitulates the central theme of Matthew and gives the disciples a task that was heretofore exclusively Jesus
- *everything that I have commanded you* – envisages everything Jesus has said and done in the gospel
- *I am with you always* – forms an inclusion with 1:23, 18:20
- *to the end of the age* – recurs in 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3

vv. 16-20 Matthew's conclusion has the same broad outline as Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-23; and the questionable Mark 16:14-20. All four texts presumably go back to some primitive proto-commissioning oral tradition shared by all four communities and authors.²⁷

The mountain top meeting with Jesus has echoes in Matthew of the Sermon on the mountain, the Transfiguration, and Dan 7:14. The sending to all nations here revises the earlier commission to only go to the lost sheep of Israel (10:5-6). The baptismal formula is the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, was presumably on the rise in the early Jesus movement and Matthean community.²⁸

The resurrection (vv. 16-18) marks the end of Jesus' earthly time and the beginning of the early Jesus movement and later early church.²⁹

²³ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 885-6

²⁴ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.659-691

²⁵ Morris, Leon, *The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750*

²⁶ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 885-6

²⁷ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 885-6

²⁸ Brown, Raymond E., S.S., *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp.202-203

²⁹ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 885-6

The passage both looks backward, summarizing Jesus' ministry as a whole, and forward to the time of the church to outline a program. Jesus tells his disciples to go into the world and teach the lessons of the new Messiah, and then promises his assisting presence.³⁰

28:16-20 is an open-ended ending to Matthew's gospel that invites the reader into the story and asserts that the story is not over. The story closes with the believer being reassured of Jesus presence as the ever-living Son of God who demands a difficult obedience but promises the ever-graceful divine presence.³¹

By Verse Comments:

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.

Meeting in Galilee after the resurrection³²:

- (Jesus) "But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." (26:32)
- (Angel) "He has been raised from the dead,[b] and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him." (28:7)
- (Matthew) "Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them." (28:16)

17 When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted.

Mixed reaction by the disciples, worshipping and doubting Jesus³³:

- "31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." (14:31-33)
- "When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted." (28:17)

18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

v. 18 is possibly alluding to Dan 7:13-14 and may also invoke Moses. Moses has several mountain top experiences; and Moses life ended on a mountaintop. The narrative has close parallels to Deut 31:14-15, 23 and Josh 1:1-9. God working through Moses commissions Joshua to act as God communicating through Moses has instructed you, and Joshua 1:1-9³⁴ promises God's presence with Joshua.³⁵

The Great Commission: Like Moses, Jesus' final instructions are given from a mountain top (Deut 32:48). *Some doubted*, fidelity and doubt to the mission of Jesus are not mutually exclusive. *All authority on heaven and earth*, means the risen Christ's domain has become the entire world.³⁶

³⁰ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 885-6

³¹ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 885-6

³² Harper Collins Study Bible, NRSV Version, pp. 1720-21

³³ Harper Collins Study Bible, NRSV Version, pp. 1720-21

³⁴ Joshua 1:1-9 1 After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses's assistant, saying, 2 "My servant Moses is dead. Now proceed to cross the Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the Israelites. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, as I promised to Moses. 4 From the wilderness and the Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, to the Great Sea in the west shall be your territory. 5 No one shall be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. 6 Be strong and courageous, for you shall lead this people to possess the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them. 7 Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to act in accordance with all the law that my servant Moses commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go. 8 This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful. 9 I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

³⁵ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 885-6

³⁶ Levine, Amy-Jill, and Marc Zvi Brettler Editors, The Jewish Annotated Bible pp. 65-66

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,

They are to go out and make disciples of all nations. It took the church some time to realize the importance and significance of this statement. The early part of the Book of Acts focusses on missionary work to Jews – by the end of Acts it is to Jews and Gentiles and has spread across the Mediterranean basin and east as well.³⁷

baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

The Trinitarian formula did not become Christian doctrine until the 4th-5th Century CE. This occurrence may reflect liturgical usage in Matthew's community, as may also apply to the baptism ritual.³⁸

They are charged to make disciples of all nations and to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Though the passage is contested by scholars it is very important to the development of the early Jesus movement/church. Other than Paul's letter to the Romans, no other NT writing gives a clearer vision of a worldwide church. It linked the responsibilities to obey and teach what Jesus had obeyed and taught. It also served as a catalyst to supercharge the activities of the early church when compared to the pace of the Gospels before the resurrection.³⁹

Moreover, in Matthew it is worth noting that Jesus tells his followers to "*baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*" Though he lists three names, he tells us to baptize in the name singular. This may be an early vestige of three in one thinking.⁴⁰

20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

What Jesus is telling the disciples to teach is "everything that I have commanded you." This is the entirety of Jesus teaching during his ministry: instruction; proverbs, blessings, parables, and prophecies. It is a unity of word and deed, imitate Christ and teach through being an example.⁴¹

The controversy cannot be resolved. It is worthwhile noting that Matthew has been given what he thinks is a reliable picture of Jesus teachings up to this point. It may be that the formula actually goes back to Jesus after he had been raised from the dead.⁴²

And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."[d]

And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Is an inclusion of God's revelation about Jesus through the prophet Isaiah at the beginning of the Gospel "*they shall name him Emmanuel, which means, "God is with us."* (1:23).⁴³

V. 20 Jesus is not sending the disciples and followers out alone. He promises to be with them to the end of time. The Gospel opened with the assurance that the coming of Jesus meant God was with his people (1:23), and now they are told that Jesus/God will be with them forever.⁴⁴

³⁷ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

³⁸ Levine, Amy-Jill, and Marc Zvi Brettler Editors, The Jewish Annotated Bible pp. 65-66

³⁹ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

⁴⁰ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

⁴¹ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary, pp. 885-6

⁴² Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

⁴³ Brown, Raymond E., S.S., An Introduction to the New Testament, pp.202-203

⁴⁴ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

REFLECTION

What is the meaning to you of:

- **The empty tomb?**
 - At the end of the day no one disagreed that the tomb was empty, and no one could produce the body. These facts lay at the bottom of the story and conflict between believers and on-believers about the resurrection in the 1st Century CE.⁴⁵
- **The resurrection?**
 - The resurrection, the full meaning of which only becomes apparent at 28:16-20, makes Jesus himself an illustration of his own teaching. He is, like the prophets before him, wrongly prosecuted because of his loyalty to God, and he gains his reward in heaven. He finds his life after losing it. He is the servant who becomes great, the last who becomes first.⁴⁶
- **The women being chosen as the first apostles to the resurrection?**
 - v. 7 The angel commissions the women to be the first messengers of the good news to the disciples and followers of Jesus. We do not know why God chose the women to hear and repeat the message first. We do know that the gospels are consistent on this point.⁴⁷
- **Belief and doubt?**
 - “When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted.” (28:17)

The Great Commission:

- **What is the nature of Jesus’ authority?**
 - Is the risen Christ’s domain the entire world?
- **How to you understand the command for teaching, baptism, early Trinitarianism and obedience?**
 - *19 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 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.*

And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

- *I AM – traditional name for the God of the Jews*
- *With you -- In a personal relationship with each individual believer*
- *Always – covenant promise*
- *Until the end of time.*

⁴⁵ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

⁴⁶ Davies, W.D., Allison, Dale C. Jr. *Matthew Volume III Chapters 19-28*, The International Critical Commentary pp.659-691

⁴⁷ Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to Matthew pp. 733-750

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

APPENDIX ONE: CHAPTER 28 AS A COMPENDIUM OF MATTHEW'S THEOLOGY⁴⁸

Galilee	Creates a literary arch 4:12 "Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee."
	Fulfills Jesus' prophecies: 26:32 "But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." 28:7 "Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead,[a] and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.'"
Mountain	Recalls the other mountain scenes: 4:8 "Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory," 5:1 "When Jesus[a] saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him." 17:1-2 "1 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. 2 And he was transfigured before them"
They worshipped him and some doubted	Foreshadowed by 14:31-33 "31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."
All authority in heaven and earth is given to me	Echoes Dan 7:13-14 "As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being[a] coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One[b] and was presented before him. 14 To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed." 11:27 "27 All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."
Jesus kingship theme	1:1 "1 An account[a] of the genealogy[b] of Jesus the Messiah,[c] the son of David, the son of Abraham."
Make disciples	13:52 "And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."
All nations	Incorporates Jesus' Gentile contacts in the Gospel: 2:1-2 2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi[a] from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east[b] and have come to pay him homage."

⁴⁸ Source : Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, Oxford Bible Commentary

	<p>4:12-15 12 Now when Jesus[a] heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. 13 He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:</p> <p>15 “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—</p> <p>8:55-7 5 When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him 6 and saying, “Lord, my servant[b] is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible distress.” 7 And he said to him, “I will come and cure him.”</p> <p>12:15-21 15 When Jesus became aware of this, he departed. Many[b] followed him, and he cured all of them, 16 and he ordered them not to make him known. 17 This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah:</p> <p>18 “Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the gentiles.</p> <p>19 He will not wrangle or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets. 20 He will not break a bruised reed or quench a smoldering wick until he brings justice to victory. 21 And in his name the gentiles will hope.”</p> <p>15:21-28 21 Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. 22 Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.” 23 But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.” 24 He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” 25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” 26 He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” 27 She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’[f] table.” 28 Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed from that moment.</p> <p>Terminates the prohibitions/Universalizes the mission 10:5-6 “5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not take a road leading to gentiles, and do not enter a Samaritan town, 6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”</p> <p>15:24 “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”</p>
<p><i>Of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit</i></p>	<p>1:18- 25 18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah[j] took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. 19 Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. 20 But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”</p>

	<p>22 All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:</p> <p>23 “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” 24 When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife 25 but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son,[k] and he named him Jesus.</p> <p>3:16-17 16 And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him, and he saw God’s Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from the heavens said, “This is my Son, the Beloved,[e] with whom I am well pleased.”</p>
<p>Teaching</p>	<p>Recapitulates the central theme of Matthew and gives the disciples a task that was heretofore exclusively Jesus.</p> <p>5:17 “17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter,[c] not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.”</p> <p>13:52 52 And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”</p> <p>23:8-12 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>everything that I have commanded you</p>	<p>Envisages everything Jesus has said and done in the gospel</p>
<p>I am with you always⁴⁹</p>	<p>Forms an inclusio with 1:23</p> <p>““Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.”</p> <p>18:20 “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”</p>
<p>to the end of the age</p>	<p>Rekurs in</p> <p>13:37-40 “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; 38 the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. 40 Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age.”;</p>

⁴⁹ Reflects Paul’s 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 23 For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body that is for[a] you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

	<p>13:49 “49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous”;</p> <p>24:3 “When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”</p>
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APPENDIX TWO: MATTHEW’S PRESENTATION OF JESUS’ PERSPECTIVE BEFORE THE CRUCIFIXION AND AFTER THE RESURRECTION⁵⁰

Issue	Before the crucifixion	After the resurrection
Resurrection	<p>16:21”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 <i>and be killed and on the third day be raised.</i>”</p> <p>17:22-3 22 As they were gathering[g] in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands, 23 <i>and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised.</i>”</p> <p>20:18-19 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 <i>crucified, and on the third day he will be raised.</i>”</p> <p>22:30-32 30 <i>For in the resurrection people neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels of God[b] in heaven.</i> 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.”</p> <p>26:31-32 31 Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away[f] because of me this night, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’”</p> <p>32 “But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.”</p>	<p>28:5-7 5 <i>But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he[a] lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead,[b] and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’</i></p> <p>28:9 9 <i>Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. 10 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.”</i></p> <p>28:16-17 16 <i>Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted.</i></p>

⁵⁰ Source : Joe Jennings, Slow Religion Matthew

<p>Jesus' authority</p>	<p>Daniel 7:13-14 "13 As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being (Aram <i>one like a son of man</i>) coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One[f] and was presented before him. 14 To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed."</p> <p>7:28-29 "the crowds were astounded at his teaching, 29 for he taught them as one having authority and not as their scribes."</p> <p>8:8-10 "8 The centurion answered, 'Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only speak the word, and my servant[c] will be healed. 9 For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me, and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it.'" 10 When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, "Truly I tell you, in no one[d] in Israel have I found such faith."</p> <p>8:27 "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"</p> <p>9:1-8 to forgive sins/heal "8 When the crowds saw it, they were filled with awe, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to human beings."</p> <p>10:1 "Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness."</p>	<p>18 <i>And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.</i></p>
<p>Who is Jesus mission to?</p>	<p>10:5-6 "5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not take a road leading to gentiles, and do not enter a Samaritan town, 6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."</p>	<p>19 <i>Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,</i></p>

	15:24 "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."	
Baptism	<p>3:11 "I baptize you with[c] water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with[d] the Holy Spirit and fire."</p> <p>We don't actually know what JohnBap or Jesus said when they baptized people.</p>	<i>Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit</i>
Relationship between Jesus, YHWH and Holy Spirit	<p>3:16-17 "16 And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him, and he saw God's Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from the heavens said, "This is my Son, the Beloved,[e] with whom I am well pleased."</p> <p>5:48 "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."</p> <p>10:20 "for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.</p> <p>11:25 "Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth"</p> <p>23:9 "And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father, the one in heaven."</p> <p>24:36 "But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."</p> <p>26:53 "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?"</p>	<i>The name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit</i>
On teaching and obedience	<p>5:17 "17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter,[c] not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished."</p> <p>5:48 "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."</p>	<i>20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.</i>

<p>Jesus' presence with us</p>	<p>1:23 "they shall name him Emmanuel, which means, "God is with us."</p>	<p><i>And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."</i>[d]</p>
<p>Timing of Eschatological End⁵¹</p>	<p>16:27-8 27 "For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. 28 Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."</p> <p>24:29-31 29 "Immediately after the suffering of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken.</p> <p>30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see 'the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven' with power and great glory. 31 And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."</p> <p>24:36, "But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son,[h] but only the Father."</p> <p>25:13, "Keep awake, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."</p> <p>25:42 Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day[i] your Lord is coming.</p>	<p><i>And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."</i>[d]</p>

⁵¹ Note: Matthew puts messages of the nearness of judgement, the lack of knowledge of when it would occur and the need to wait all before the resurrection in Chapter 28.