

## The Book of Matthew

# 1

## Morning Devotions

Select a passage in God's Word. Talk with the Lord as you read the passage, then go back and find one or two verses which the Lord has impressed on your heart and meditate on them.

## Morning Study

Today we study the book of **Matthew**, the first book of the New Testament.

This Gospel account was long considered to be the first written, and the early church fathers were unanimous in regarding the author to have been Matthew, one of the twelve apostles. Matthew would also have been a logical choice for recording the life of Jesus, since as a tax collector, he would have had a high standard of education.

Scholars of the last two centuries, however, have questioned Matthew's authorship of this account, since most now believe that **Matthew** borrows heavily from **Mark**, which is now considered to be the first account written. Why, they ask, should an original eyewitness need to borrow from someone who was not a direct eyewitness?

If **Mark** was indeed written first (which is not universally conceded), it is not inconceivable that **Matthew** was familiar with **Mark's** work and built upon it to produce an account particularly geared to the Hebrew mindset.

Many elements within **Matthew** point to a Jewish readership. The author is concerned with the fulfillment of prophecy, with more quotations from the Old Testament than any other Gospel account. His genealogy is traced from Abraham, and unlike **Mark**, he doesn't explain Jewish customs to his readers.

This morning, we will be focusing on the first seven chapters of **Matthew**. These chapters can be divided into three subsections:

- **Chapters 1-2** – The birth and early years of Jesus
- **Chapters 3-4** – The inauguration of the ministry of Jesus
- **Chapters 5-7** – The hilltop discourses of Jesus

Let's find a comfortable chair and read **chapters 1-7** in one sitting.

# Memory Verse

Then you will know the truth,  
and the truth will set you free.

John 8:32

## Your Fishing Kit

This is the twenty-fifth verse in your fishing kit. In this remarkable verse, Jesus shows the full power of the Gospel. By knowing the truth, the truth will actually set a person free. But this is not just any truth. This is the truth that Jesus is one with the power to set us free.

Here are the other verses in your “fishing kit”:

|                        |                      |                     |                           |
|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>John 3:16</b>       | <b>Isaiah 55:6-7</b> | <b>John 1:12</b>    | <b>2 Corinthians 5:17</b> |
| <b>John 3:18</b>       | <b>Romans 5:8</b>    | <b>John 3:3</b>     | <b>2 Corinthians 5:21</b> |
| <b>John 3:36</b>       | <b>1 John 4:10</b>   | <b>John 5:24</b>    | <b>Matthew 10:32-33</b>   |
| <b>Ephesians 1:7-8</b> | <b>Acts 2:38</b>     | <b>John 6:37</b>    | <b>Romans 2:4-5</b>       |
| <b>Romans 3:23</b>     | <b>Acts 3:19</b>     | <b>John 8:32</b>    | <b>Acts 17:30</b>         |
| <b>Romans 6:23</b>     | <b>Acts 4:12</b>     | <b>John 8:36</b>    | <b>1 John 5:10</b>        |
| <b>Isaiah 53:5</b>     | <b>John 14:6</b>     | <b>John 10:10</b>   | <b>1 John 5:11-12</b>     |
| <b>Isaiah 53:6</b>     | <b>1 John 1:8</b>    | <b>John 10:28</b>   | <b>John 14:1-3</b>        |
| <b>Isaiah 59:1-2</b>   | <b>1 John 1:9</b>    | <b>Romans 10:9</b>  | <b>John 16:33</b>         |
| <b>Isaiah 64:6</b>     | <b>1 John 1:10</b>   | <b>Romans 10:13</b> | <b>Revelation 3:20</b>    |

Store these verses in your heart. Memorize them until they have an “on the tip of your tongue” familiarity. You will find them of immeasurable value as you cooperate with the Lord in his mission of bringing the Gospel to this lost world.