



## Sermon Series Summer 2020: "Come, follow me..."

For June to August, our Sunday sermons and midweek group study notes will follow a section of Matthew's gospel (Chapters 9 to 13).

The key question asked in these chapters is: how do we each respond to Jesus, to his call to "follow me"? With opposition, indifference, shallow acceptance or full submission?

Matthew the person is introduced to us in Chapter 9 (verse 9); he is the tax collector (called 'Levi' in the other Gospels) who becomes one of the twelve apostles. Matthew may have written the Gospel himself, or it may have been written on his behalf by members of a Christian community which he led – it does not really matter. Either way, the Gospel has a very clear Jewish focus (much more so than Mark, Luke or John), with an emphasis on fulfilment of the Old Testament.

Probably with the purpose of presenting Jesus as a second (and greater!) Moses, the Gospel of Matthew mirrors the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament) by being systematically arranged around five major discourses of Jesus, interspersed with narratives (*see the table below*). Events are not necessarily recorded in a strict chronological order. Chapters 10 and 13 represent the second and third of these discourses, the first being the 'Sermon on the Mount' (Chapters 5 to 7), which we went through in some detail at St Paul's in the first part of 2018 (with our series entitled 'The Good and Beautiful Life').

Between the first and second discourses (Chapters 8 and 9) the narrative is built around three sets of three miracles. The last of these 'trios' focuses particularly on the 'newness' that Jesus brings (new health for the sick, new life for the dead, new sight for the blind, new speech for the mute), and follows immediately after the calling of Matthew (which is where we begin our series on 7<sup>th</sup> June) and Jesus' insistence on a proper new start ("new wine needs new wineskins", which we looked at on Pentecost Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> May).

The Chapter 10 discourse is directed specifically at the twelve disciples, as they are commissioned to go out into the harvest field (in response to Jesus' heartfelt prayer of 9:36-37) and proclaim the coming of Christ's kingdom. The Chapter 13 discourse has a much wider audience as Jesus tells a series of 'parables of the kingdom' (beginning with the well-known 'parable of the sower'), highlighting the different ways in which different people respond to the gospel message and the important, everlasting consequences of that choice.

In Chapters 11 and 12 between these two discourses, the emphasis of the narrative is on what Jesus claims about himself. The first part of Chapter 11 builds confidence in Jesus as he responds to John the Baptist's question "Are you the one?" by detailing how he is fulfilling the Scriptures and demonstrating the power of God, leading on to one of Jesus' great statements of purpose – to give rest to the weary and burdened (11:28-30). Chapter 12 then starts to introduce some of the reasons why people reject Jesus' claims (and the theme of 'rejection' then continues to pick up momentum as the story continues from Chapter 14 onwards).

We won't be able to cover everything from Chapters 9-13 in the morning sermons, but we may well try to pick up some of the bits that get 'missed out' in the 6.30 evening service, if that seems appropriate.

## The Gospel of Matthew

(summary of structure)

<b>Ch 1-4</b> The birth and infancy of Christ The baptism and temptation of Christ	
	<b>Ch 5-7: 1<sup>st</sup> discourse</b> The Sermon on the Mount
<b>Ch 8-9</b> The works of Christ, including three sets of three miracles: Healings (man with leprosy; centurion's servant; Peter's mother-in-law) Power (over the forces of nature; over the demonic; over sin) Making new (bleeding woman & dead girl; two blind men; demon-possessed mute man)	
	<b>Ch 10: 2<sup>nd</sup> discourse</b> Sending out the twelve
<b>Ch 11-12</b> The claims of Christ Jesus and John the Baptist The refusal of the gospel The offer of the gospel Healings, controversies and challenges to commitment	
	<b>Ch 13: 3<sup>rd</sup> discourse</b> Parables of the kingdom
<b>Ch 14-17</b> Opposition to Christ grows Execution of John the Baptist The Pharisees and Sadducees Peter's confession; Jesus predicts his death The Transfiguration and its consequences	
	<b>Ch 18: 4<sup>th</sup> discourse</b> Life and relationships in the kingdom
<b>Ch 19-23</b> Journey and entry into Jerusalem Judgment against Jewish leaders	
	<b>Ch 24-25: 5<sup>th</sup> discourse</b> The fall of Jerusalem and the second coming; parables about judgment
<b>Ch 26-28</b> The passion and death of Christ The resurrection of Christ	



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<b>Date</b>	<b>Matthew</b>	<b>Title</b>
7 June	9:9-13	Come follow me... as you are
14 June	9:18-26	Come follow me... to new life and forgiveness
21 June	9:35-38	Come follow me... there's a harvest to bring in (part 1)
28 June	10:1-20	Come follow me... there's a harvest to bring in (part 2)
5 July	10:26-42	Come follow me... you'll lose and find your life
12 July	11:1-19	Come follow me... will you? (choices)
19 July	11:25-30	Come follow me... and live a new way
26 July	12:1-14	Come follow me... and do good
2 August	12:38-45	Come follow me... what are you waiting for?
9 August	13:1-9 & 18-23	Did you hear the one about... the sower?
16 August	13:24-30 & 36-43	Did you hear the one about... the weeds?
23 August	13:31-32	Did you hear the one about... the mustard seed?
30 August	13:44-46	Did you hear the one about... the hidden treasure?