

Meet Jesus with Matthew

His character and mission

Sermon on Matthew 4

Introduction

- The claim about Jesus has reached its climax: s. Ch. 3:16-17
- Implication: Jesus is Gods Son (s. Psalm 2), now there is a new beginning
- The promised Redeemer is the new Adam (will there be a new Eve?)

Overview of chapter 4:

- The faithfulness of the Redeemer (vs. 1-11)
- The focus of the Redeemer (vs. 12-23)
- The followers of the Redeemer (vs. 24-25)

1. The faithfulness of the Redeemer

- When there is `a new one' there is always the question: is the new one better?
- Again, Matthew deals with credibility questions!
- Jesus is led by the Spirit to the desert to be tested by the devil:
 - where Adam and his descendants failed
 - where Abrahams descendants failed (the people of God!)
- Failure: to trust Gods word, his promises and warnings
- (concerning our (legitimate) longings to be satisfied, to be safe and to shine)
- Jesus fails not: He is the faithful Redeemer!
- Why must we hear this?
 - Not: good advice or as exhortation: try harder in temptation!
 - But: good news: he knows you; he is the faithful Redeemer. Turn to Him!

2. The focus of the Redeemer

THE MISSION OF THE FAITHFUL REDEEMER: to bring a new liberation. Now his work begins. Observe:

- Where He begins: in Galilee:
 - the edge of Jews and gentiles
 - his people dwelling in darkness and shadow of death: he comes for his bride, he has compassion with his people, he has heard them cry – as once in Egypt!
- How He begins: preaching & teaching. Like once Moses and Aaron: call for faith, God will bring redemption, obey and follow!
- What He begins: what kind of redemption will follow? Who will drown now? (c. Pharaoh & soldiers, c. Noah) Observe that His focus is to save! To pick up from the sea, in stead of drowning people! He will save people from their sins. Drawn will be: sins (Micah 7:19), He Himself will go into the depths on the cross, to save us! Before He comes to judge the world, He came to save.
- With whom He begins: c. Moses (did things alone, had to learn to share ministry, appoint leaders). Jesus immediately involves others in His saving work. Although He must do the main saving work alone (Gethsemane, Golgotha); those who will be redeemed are immediately called to be involved to extend the redeeming work!

3. The followers of the Redeemer

Observe:

- How many! (Great crowds from everywhere; this was the beginning, goes on until now)
- Jesus' attention for them! (They are not just a mass, he sees them with their needs, pains, illness, to what they are bound) He comes to deal with the root of all their problems. But He starts with what troubles them most. They may come to Him – the same is true today!
- *THE CHARACTER OF THE FAITHFUL REDEEMER*: He is the merciful Messiah, full of compassion for His people, the Good Shepherd Davidic King. (S. Psalm 72:12-14, Psalm 23).

Time to draw conclusions!

Does Matthew help you to meet Jesus? He proclaims and explains the mission and the character of Jesus for us with a purpose – He wants you, me, us to be involved. We should not reject the message as irrational nonsense. Although it is a strange and sometimes incredible story, it is not an irrational or incomprehensible story – Matthew wants to help you. He invites us to connect, to choose, to get involved. Remember how Joseph chose to connect to Mary, how the wise men chose to go and search the King, how in response of the preaching of John and Jesus multitudes came to be baptised and to find salvation. What will you do?

Don't keep aloof, just saying: interesting, without doing something with it.

But come to the risen Saviour, the Servant King, come as you are, humble and honest,

- to be saved by His saving work on the cross
- to be changed by meeting His wonderful character
- and to be involved, for He calls more people to be fishers of men

Let us pray now...