

10/14/18

The Apostle Matthew

There are some people God uses, that if we were honest we would say, “Why did God call them, how is it possible for God to use them or “I would have picked someone more qualified and credible”.

* That is exactly the people God uses, “But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.” 1Cor 1:27-29

* Matthew falls into this category!

The interesting thing is there were many other disciple that Jesus could have chosen that had been with Him from the beginning of his baptism to the day of His ascension, like Joseph called Barsabas, surnamed Justus and Matthias, the two chosen to be voted on to take Judas Iscariot’s place. Acts 1:23

* Yet He chose twelve after an entire night in prayer!

We want to look at the eighth apostle Matthew under three categories. Matt. 10:3b

- I.** The character Matthew.
- II.** The call of Matthew.
- III.** The commission of Matthew.

I. The character Matthew.

A. The name of Matthew.

- 1.** His name Matthew Matthaïos means “gift of Yahweh”, equivalent to the name Theodore.
- 2.** The name of Matthew appears five times.
 - a.** Three times in the lists of the twelve apostles. Matt. 10:3; Mk. 3:18; Lk. 6:15
 - b.** The fourth in the book of Acts. Acts 1:13
- 4.** The name of Matthew falls in different orders in the lists.
 - a.** In Matthew he is the eight, following Thomas.
 - b.** In Mark and Luke, he is seventh, following Bartholomew.
 - c.** In Acts, he is eight as in Matthew but he follows Bartholomew instead of Thomas.
- 5.** The name of Matthew is in the second group of four.
 - a.** He is in the second most intimate group in relation to Jesus.
 - b.** He is the third or fourth in the order of this second group.
- 6.** Matthew is known by another name also. Levi “leuis” which means joined.
 - a.** It appears four times. Mk. 2:14, 15; Lk. 5:27, 29
 - b.** Again we have two names for Matthew, like Peter, James, John and Batholomew.

B. The lineage of Matthew.

1. He is called the son of Alphaeus. Mk. 2:14
2. His father is not to be confused with the father of James, also named “Alphaeus”. Matt.10:3c; Mk. 3:15f; Lk. 6:15b; Acts 1:13h
 - a. Among the twelve apostles there were two James; James the brother of John, one of “the sons of Thunder” and James the son of Alphaeus.
 - b. There are also two apostles named “Judas”, the son of James and Judas Ischariot. Lk. 6:16
3. We know nothing else about Matthew.
 - a. Neither his place of residence.
 - b. Nor his upbringing.
 - c. Nor of any other family descendants.
4. He was a Jew living contrary to all that he had been taught and knew to be wrong.
 - a. Violating his conscience, even to the point of searing it.
 - b. Very well knowing he fell under the wrath of his people, the Jews, also God.
 - c. Vilified by all, he became more callous, withdrawn and lonely.

C. The occupation of Matthew.

1. Matthew was a Publican or tax collector.
 - a. The title Publican, tax collector “telones” meant a renter or farmer of taxes.

- b. There is no other apostle listed by his profession prior to coming to Christ, Matthew is the only one.
 - c. Matthew alone identifies himself as a tax collector or publican in his list of the twelve apostles.
 - 1) Matthew I believe does so to exalt the grace of God over his sinful life.
 - 2) Matthew I believe does so to give hope to all thinking themselves too sinful for Christ to except them.
 - 3) Matthew being the only one to list himself in such fashion, also reveals the love and acceptance of Matthew by the others apostles, never wanting to demean him by his old profession.
 - d. Mark, Luke and Acts list him as Matthew.
2. Publicans or tax collector were hated and despised by all but most of all by the Jews, being under tribute to another government.
 - a. The Roman government subcontracted the various regions to the highest bidder, as the title “Publican or tax collector.
 - 1) The set amount to Rome would be paid and then anything else taken would be the tax collectors, which lent itself to great dishonesty.
 - 2) There were two types of tax collectors.
 - a) Those who would have other collect for them and pay them a fee.

- b)** Those who collected the tax themselves, not wanting to loose any amount, but keep it all for themselves.
 * This was the kind Matthew was as he sat at the seat of custom or tax office at Capernaum to collect all for himself, at the very headquarters of Jesus. Lk. 5:27
- c)** To make it worst he knew that the collected taxes of Capernaum would go into the treasury of Herod Antipas.
- b.** Tax collectors or publicans were consider the worst of all men.
- 1)** They were categorized with prostitutes and sinners.
 - 2)** They were the lowest of men, notoriously dishonest, fleecing not only their own countrymen but also the government who they worked for.
 - 3)** The thought of a Jew collecting taxes was considered a great unpatriotic thing one could do, a traitor to his people, such was Matthew.
 - a)** This was Matthew.
 - b)** Publicans were bared from the synagogue.

* That is why the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, “God, be merciful to me a sinner!” Lk. 18:13

- b)** Publicans were not permitted to testify as a witness, being known as perpetual liars.
- 4)** The tax collector spared no one, not the widow, the orphan, the poor nor the oppressed, this was Matthew and he knew what the Law had to say about such a person.
- c.** The taxes were of various kinds.
- 1)** There was a ground tax of one-tenth of his grain and one-fifth of his fruit and vine to the government, either in cash or kind.
 - 2)** There was income-tax, which was one per cent of a man’s income.
 - 3)** There was a poll-tax that paid by every male from 14 to the age of 65 and every female from 12 to 65.
 - 4)** There was tax on all goods imported or exports, from 2 1/2% to 12 1/2%
 - 5)** There were taxes to travel the main roads, to cross bridges, to enter marketplaces, towns or harbors.
 - 6)** There was taxes on pack animals, the number of wheels and axles on a cart.
- d.** The publicans and tax collectors became very wealthy.

Illustration

John Newton who ran away to sea, and then to Africa, was sold at last to a black woman. He sank so

low that he lived only on crumbs from her table and on wild yams dug at night. His clothing was reduced to a single shirt which he washed in the ocean.

When he finally escaped, he went to the natives, accepting their base life. It does not seem possible for a civilized man to have sunk so low, but the power of God laid hold on him through a missionary. He became a sea captain; later became a Minister, He wrote many hymns sung the world around, like "Amazing Grace".

In the church of London which he was the pastor, there is still an epitaph which John Newton wrote for himself. It reads: "Sacred to the memory of John Newton, once a libertine and blasphemer and slave of slaves in Africa, but renewed, purified, pardoned, and appointed to preach the Gospel which he had labored to destroy!" # 3863

Application

1. Perhaps you are like Matthew, your choices in life have caused more pain and suffering than the benefit you thought to receive, through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. 1Jn. 2:16

- a. Maybe it was a life of drugs that has caused you the loss of the most precious things of life.
- b. Or a life of sexual freedom that promised so much fun and excitement, only to bring about regret, anguish, guilt of abortions and children out of wedlock, even to sell yourself as a prostitute.

- c. Perhaps your pursuit was money and you have been dishonest, even to your own family and friends, causing your misery and loneliness.
2. Publicans like Matthew are in the Bible to encourage those who have gone so far down into the pit in order to give them hope in Jesus.
- a. "Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich....Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold. And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Lk. 19:2, 8-10
 - b. Jesus said, "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, "God, I thank You that I am not like other men--extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess." And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." Lk. 18:10-14

3. We are to treat those in the church who refuse to be approached to be corrected in life-style in conformity to the Scriptures, as publicans and sinner, disciplining them by ex-communication until they repent.

* “And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.” Matt. 18:17

The character of Matthew was one of utter sin!

II. The call of Matthew.

A. The response of Matthew was immediate. Matt. 9:9-13; Mk. 2:14; Lk. 5:27-32

* We will use Matthew’s own account and supplement it with Mark and Luke!

1. We are told by Matthew that Jesus passed on from the place in Capernaum where He had just healed the paralytic and He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office.

Matt. 9:9a-b

- a. Mark and Luke only differ in that they call him Levi, the son of Alphaeus.
- b. Jesus must have seen Matthew many times in his tax office and I am sure their eyes must of met often.
- c. Jesus must have brought such conviction to Matthew as well as feelings of compatibility with Jesus.
 - 1) Conviction due to the fact that he was a Jew, a traitor to his people and

knowing that the Scriptures condemned him.

- 2) Compatibility, due to the fact that both Jesus and Matthew were hated by the Pharisees and the Scribes, both outcasts of society on opposite sides.
2. Then we are told by Matthew the Lord Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.” Matt. 9:9c-d
 - a. Mark and Luke tells nothing different.
 - b. This was the day which Matthew would have to make a decision about Jesus.
 - c. The timing of God is sovereign and perfect, when He calls.
 - d. The decision was equally an invitation to leave behind his life occupation.
 3. Then Matthew tells us, that he arose and followed Him. Matt. 9:9e
 - a. Mark adds nothing new.
 - 1) The phrase to follow Him, meant he believed who Jesus said He was, the Son of God and Savior of the world.
 - 2) The phrase meant he was following the kingdom of God based on righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, not money and wealth as before!
 - b. Luke adds, “So he left all, rose up, and follow Him”. Lk. 5:28
 - 1) For Matthew it was a decision of abandoning all, he could never go

back, even if he wanted to as the others did in fishing.

- 2) For Matthew it meant everything was being laid down.
- 3) For Matthew it was a total surrender, to never look back.

B. The reaction of Matthew was to reach out to others like himself.

1. Matthew tells us, “Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house”. Matt. 9:10a-b
 - a. Mark and Luke tell us the feast was at Matthew’s house. Mk. 2:15b; Lk. 5:29b
 - b. Luke says it was a great feast. Lk. 5:29b
 - c. Matthew was excited about his decision and his new life.
 - b. Matthew was excited about introducing Jesus to his friends as guest of honor, so he threw a party to celebrate his new life.
2. Matthew tells us next, “That behold, many tax collectors and sinners came.” Matt. 9:10c-d
 - a. These were the outcast of the earth.
 - b. These no religious person among the Pharisee, Saducees or Scribes would ever be seen taking to these people.
 - c. These were the ones no one offered any hope to and written off by society.

3. Matthew tell us also that these individuals, “Sat down with Him and His disciples. Matt. 9:10d
 - a. The apostles were like their Master.
 - b. Luke doesn’t add anything.
 - c. Mark tells us an interesting fact, “That there were many and they followed Him”. Mk. 2:15d-e
 - d. This was the entire purpose Matthew had the feast, not to celebrate himself but to save his friends!

C. The response of the Pharisees to Jesus.

1. Matthew declares, “And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” Matt. 9:11
 - a. Mark tells us that they said, “How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?” Mk. 2:16c
 - 1) In other words, how can He bring Himself to be associated and be one with them.
 - 2) Eating and drinking with someone was the equivalent of becoming one, tearing a piece of bread from the same bread and dipping into the same bowl.
 - 3) No Jew would eat with a Gentile, remember Peter on the roof top at Joppa and his vision and going to the house of Cornelius. Acts 10

- b. Luke tells us that the Pharisees grumbled against the disciples and asked them, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinner?” Lk. 5:30c
 - 1) They being Jew also were being asked to re-examine what they were doing.
 - 2) The being one with Jesus were equally being rejected, as Jesus by the religious community.
- 2. Matthew tells us, “When Jesus heard this, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick”. Matt. 9:12
 - a. The response if a sharp rebuke to the religious men of His day, the leader of the people.
 - b. They first failed to see their own need of the Physician, having the sickness of sin, for all have sinned. Rom. 3:23
 - c. They also failed to rejoice at the spiritual cleansing and healing.
- 3. Matthew tells us Jesus instructs them by sending them back to the Scriptures, “But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.” Matt. 9:13
 - a. Mark and Luke add nothing at this point.
 - b. Matthew is the only one who points out the passage in Hosea, that “I desire mercy and not sacrifice. Hos. 6:6

- 1) Jesus tells them to go learn what that meant.
- 2) God did not nor does today delight in sacrifices, they are a stench to Him, if our heart if not right with God.
- 3) God delights in being merciful, having pity on those who can not help themselves.
- 4) God does not delight in judgment but forgiveness.
- c. Matthew declares plainly and clearly the entire purpose of the coming of Jesus both to the earth and his house was to call sinners to repentance not the righteous.
 - 1) The implication being that all qualify, as sinners.
 - 2) The declaration, that there are none righteous.

Illustration

One Sunday mornng, in 1856, a congragation of well-dressed people had been ushered to their rented pews in Chicago’s Plymouth Congregation Church. Suddenly there was commotion near the door. Many turned and looked. Something occurred which had never before been seen by that elite congregation.

In walked a young man--a ninteen year-old salesman. Following him was a motley group of tramps, slum people and alcoholics. The young man led them into four pews he had personally rented for

the visitors. He continued to do this important work each Sunday until God called him into a world-wide ministry. You ask the name of that young man?--
Dwight L. Moody #5870

Application

1. Every person has to decide for themselves whether they are going to follow Jesus or not!
 - a. To follow Him means that He is my Lord and Savior. Jn. 4:42
 - b. He calls the shots in my life and I live my life now according to the standard of God's word by His Holy Spirit. Gal. 2:20
2. Every person who accepts Jesus as their Lord and Savior needs to reflect on their life occupation.
 - a. If what one is doing prior to be a Christian is not contrary to the Scriptures, then I can continue to do the same. 1Jn. 1:6
 - b. If I am in the pornography industry, prostitution, a bar tender, a drug dealer or a nude dancer, then I must turn from it, for I am a new creature. 2Cor. 5:17
3. Everyone of us should be know after the same identity as Jesus.
 - a. One who is eats and drinks with sinners to minister the gospel to them. 2Cor. 5:20
 - b. One, not be intimidated by the holier than thou Pharisees. 2Tim. 1:7
 - c. One who call them to repentance.
 - * Jesus was known as a friend of tax collectors and sinners! Matt. 11:19; Lk. 7:34

The call of Matthew was embraced whole-heartedly!

III. The commission of Matthew.

- A. Matthew was to be the author of the first Gospel.
 1. He being a Jew and chosen to write to the Jews regarding the Messiah, in order to show them that Jesus was their Messiah, focusing on the teaching and saying of Jesus the son of David. Matt. 1
 2. He quotes more Old Testament Scriptures and about the Messiah than the others, even combined.
 - * The repeated phrases such as "This was done in fulfillment", "that it might be fulfilled", "it is written" and "you have heard it said", all with a distinct purpose in mind, Jesus was the Messiah.
 3. Matthew forms a natural bridge between the Old Testament and New Testament in fulfillment of Malachi's promise of the Coming Messiah.
 - a. Jewish customs are not explained.
 - b. The law is key in the Sermon on the Mount.
 4. Matthew's gospel was the most widely read Gospel in the early church.
 - * His old profession prepared him for the recording of the Gospel, though despised by the Jews.

5. Matthew was present from Capernaum, at the ascension of Jesus, at the upper room and Pentecost. Acts 1-2
 7. Matthew was the only eyewitness and traveler with Jesus besides John, who wrote a gospel.
 - a. Mark wrote his Gospel from Peter.
 - b. Luke wrote his Gospel from interviews
- B. Matthew was to present Jesus as the King of the Jews.**
1. He presents Jesus as the King of the Jews.
 - * The first three are called synoptic meaning to view or see together, each recording the life and ministry of Jesus from an individual perspective
 2. The kingdom of heaven appears thirty-two times but nowhere else in New Testament.
 3. The phrase “Kingdom of God”, four times.
 4. The word “Kingdom”, appears fifty-six times.
 5. Jesus is called the “Son of David” nine times.
 6. Matthew alone quotes Jesus’ words about His “throne and His glory”. Matt. 19:28-31
 7. Only Matthew calls Jerusalem “The Holy City” and “The City of the King”. Matt. 4:5; 5:35

8. Jesus is not only presented as king of the Jews but the judge. Matt. 19:28; 24:27-31; 25:31-46; 26:64
 - a. There is the denunciation of Jewish rulers and scribes for corrupting their tradition.
 - b. There is a clear and strong warning to prepares the Jews for “last days” persecution. Matt. 24
 9. Jesus’ kingdom is spiritual, but will be manifested. Matt. 8:11; 12:28; 13:40-43
 - * The Great Commission is the closing signature of Matthew, for he loved sinner as his Master, Jesus! Matt. 28:19-20
- C. Matthew was to record some of the most important things hidden in the past.**
1. The passage is called “The Kingdom Parables” where Jesus lays out the mystery of the Kingdom. Matt. 13:1-52
 - * Matthew tells us that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: “I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.” Matt. 13:35.
 - a. The Parable of the Sower.
 - b. The Parable of the Wheat and Tares.
 - c. The Parable of the Mustard Seed.
 - d. The Parable of the Leaven.
 - e. The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price.

- f. The Parable of the Dragnet.
2. The Parables had a two-fold purpose.
- a. To incite a desire to understand for those who are still open to God.
 - * “Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.” Matt. 13:13
 - b. To hinder seeing to those whose have hard hearts and keep them from understanding, due to their own doing, not God’s.
 - 1) “And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: `Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive.” Matt. 13:14
 - 2) “For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.” Matt. 13:15
3. The Parable of the Sower and the rest are key to understanding all other parable.
- * Mark is the one who tells us this, “And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?” Mk. 4:13

Illustration

Livingstone planned to go to China, but God led him to Africa, to be its missionary statesman, general and explorer. Alexander Mackay prepared for work in Madagascar, but was directed to Uganda, to aid in founding one of the most remarkable missions in the world. Carey proposed to go to the South Sea, but was guided divinely to India, to give the Bible in their native tongue to its teeming millions. #1915

Application

1. Have you limited yourself in what God wants to do with your life “in Christ”. Jn. 15:5
 - a. He will enable you as Matthew.
 - b. He will be the one to choose what that is.
 - c. He will be faithful in all aspects.
2. Is Jesus your King. Rev. 19:16
 - a. Does He call all the shots in your life?
 - b. Does He have access to every area of your life?
 - c. Does He know that you would do as Matthew, arise and leave all behind?
3. Do you understand the “Kingdom Parables”? Col. 3:2
 - a. If you do, then you will be sharing Christ with sinners.
 - b. If you do, then you are vigilant of false doctrine.
 - c. If you do, then you will know that not all who say they are Christians are.
 - d. If you do know that Christ will separate the true church at the Rapture!

The commission of Matthew was to affect the entire world and the church!

Conclusion

This is Matthew, the eighth apostle by these three categories.

- I.** The character of Matthew was one of utter sin!
- II.** The call of Matthew was embraced wholeheartedly!
- III.** The commission of Matthew was to affect the entire world and the church!